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Benny and the Bird Dogs

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A story by the author of "South Moon Under"

You can't change a man, no-ways. By the time his mammy turns him loose and he takes up with some innocent woman and marries her, he's what he is. If it's his nature to set by the hearthfire and scratch hisself, you just as good to let him set and scratch. If it's his nature, like Will Dover, my man, to go to the garage in his Sunday clothes and lay down under some backwoods Cracker's old greasy Ford and tinker with it, you just as good to let him lay and tinker. And if it's his nature, like Uncle Benny, to prowl; if it's his nature to cut the fool; why, it's interfering in the ways of Providence even to stop to quarrel with him about it. Some women is born knowing that. Sometimes a woman, like the Old Hen (Uncle Benny's wife, poor soul!), has to quarrel a lifetime before she learns it. Then when it does come to her, she's like a cow has tried to jump a high fence and has got hung up on it—she's hornswoggled.

The Old Hen's a mighty fine woman—one of the finest I know. She looks just the way she did when she married Uncle Benny Mathers thirty years ago, except her hair has turned gray, like the feathers on a Gray Hackle game hen. She's plump and pretty and kind of pale from thirty years' fretting about Uncle Benny. She has a disposition, by nature, as sweet as new cane syrup. When she settled down for a lifetime's quarrel-

ling at him, it was for the same reason syrup sours—the heat had just been put to her too long.

I can't remember a time when the Old Hen wasn't quarrelling at Uncle Benny. It begun a week after they was married. He went off prowling by hisself, to a frolic or such as that, and didn't come home until four o'clock in the morning. She was setting up waiting for him. When she crawled him about it, he said, "Bless Katy, wife, let's sleep now and quarrel in the morning." So she quarrelled in the morning and just kept it up. For thirty years. Not for meanness—she just kept hoping she could change him.

Change him? When he takened notice of the way she was fussing and clucking and ruffing her feathers, he quit calling her by her given name and begun calling her the Old Hen. That's all I could ever see she changed him.

Uncle Benny's a sight. He's been constable here at Oak Bluff, Florida, for twenty years. We figure it keeps him out of worse trouble to let him be constable. He's the quickest shot in three counties and the colored folks is all as superstitious of him as if he was the devil hisself. He's a comical-appearing somebody. He's small and quick and he don't move—he prances. He has a little bald sun-tanned head with a rim of white hair around the back of it. Where the hair ends at the sides of his

head, it sticks straight up over his ears in two little white tufts like goat-horns. He's got bright blue eyes that look at you quick and wicked, the way a goat looks. That's exactly what he looks and acts like—a mischievous little old billy-goat. And he's been popping up under folks' noses and playing tricks on them as long as Oak Bluff has knowned him. Doc in particular. He loved to torment Doc.

And stay home? Uncle Benny don't know what it is to stay home. The Old Hen'll cook hot dinner for him and he won't come. She'll start another fire in the range and warm it up for him about dusk-dark and he won't come. She'll set up till midnight, times till day-break, and maybe just about the time the east lightens and the birds gets to whistling good, he'll come home. Where's he been? He's been with somebody 'gatoring, or with somebody catching crabs to Salt Springs; he's been to a square-dance twenty miles away in the flat-woods; he's been on the highway in that Ford car, just rambling as long as his gas held out—and them seven pieded bird-dogs setting up in the back keeping him company.

It was seven years ago, during the Boom, that he bought the Model-T and begun collecting bird-dogs. Everybody in Florida was rich for a while, selling gopher holes to the Yankees. Now putting an automobile under Uncle Benny was like putting wings on a wild-cat—it just opened up new territory. Instead of rambling over one county, he could ramble over ten. And the way he drove—like a bat out of Torment. He's one of them men just loves to cover the ground. And that car and all them bird-dogs worked on the Old Hen like a quart of gasoline on a camp-fire. She really went to raring. I tried to tell her then 'twasn't no use to pay him no mind, but she wouldn't listen.

I said, "It's just his nature. You can't do a thing about it but take it for your share and go on. You and Uncle Benny is just made different. You want him home and he don't want to be home. You're a barn-yard fowl and he's a wild fowl."

"Mis' Dover," she said, "it's easy for you to talk. Your man runs a garage and comes home nights. You don't know how terrible it is to have a man that prowls."

I said, "Leave him prowls."

She said, "Yes, but when he's on the prowl, I don't no more know where to look for him than somebody's tom-cat."

I said, "If 'twas me, I wouldn't look for him."

She said, "Moonlight nights he's the worst. Just like the varmints."

I said, "Don't that tell you nothing?"

She said, "If he'd content hisself with prowling—But he ain't content until he cuts the fool. He takes that Ford car and them seven bird-dogs and maybe a pint

of moonshine, and maybe picks up Doc to prowl with him, and he don't rest until he's done something crazy. What I keep figuring is, he'll kill hisself in that Ford car, cutting the fool."

I said, "You don't need to fret about him and that Ford. What's unnatural for one man is plumb natural for another. And cutting the fool is so natural for Uncle Benny, it's like a bird in the air or a fish in water—there won't no harm come to him from it."

She said, "Mis' Dover, what the devil throws over his back has got to come down under his belly."

I said, "Uncle Benny Mathers is beyond rules and sayings. I know men-folks, and if you'll listen to me, you'll settle down and quit quarrelling and leave him 'oo his way in quiet."

I happened to be in on it this spring, the last time the Old Hen ever quarrelled at Uncle Benny. Me and Doc was both in on it. It was the day of old lady Weller's burying. Doc carried me in his car to the cemetery. My Will couldn't leave the garage, because the trucks hauling the Florida oranges north was bringing in pretty good business. Doc felt obliged to go to the burying. He's a patent-medicine salesman—a big fat fellow with a red face and yellow hair. He sells the Little Giant line of remedies. Old lady Weller had been one of his best customers. She'd taken no nourishment the last week of her life except them remedies, and Doc figured he ought to pay her the proper respect and show everybody he was a man was always grateful to his customers.

Uncle Benny and the Old Hen went to the burying in the Model-T. And the seven bird-dogs went, setting up in the back seat. They always went to the burrys.

Uncle Benny said, "Walls nor chains won't hold 'em. Better to have 'em go along riding decent and quiet, than to bust loose and foller the Model-T like a dag-gone pack of bloodhounds."

That was true enough. Those bird-dogs could hear that old Ford crank up and go off in low gear, clear across the town. They'd always hope it was time to go bird-hunting again, and here they'd come, trailing it. So there were the bird-dogs riding along to old lady Weller's burying, with their ears flopping and their noses in the air for quail. As constable, Uncle Benny sort of represented the town, and he was right in behind the hearse. I mean, that car was a pain, to be part of a funeral procession. In the seven years he'd had it, he'd all but drove it to pieces, and it looked like a rusty, mangy razor-back hog. The hood was thin and narrow, like a shoat's nose—you remember the way all Model-T Fords were built. It had no top to it, nor no doors to the front seat, and the back seat rose up in a hump where the bird-dogs had squeezed the excelsior chitlin's out of it.

The Old Hen sat up stiff and proud, not letting on she minded. Doc and I figured she'd been quarrelling at Uncle Benny about the bird-dogs, because when one of them put his paws on her shoulders and begun licking around her ears, she turned and smacked the breath out of him.

The funeral procession had just left the Oak Bluff dirt road and turned onto No. 9 Highway, when the garage keeper at the bend ran out.

He hollered, "I just got a 'phone call for Uncle Benny Mathers from the high sheriff!"

So Uncle Benny cut out of the procession and drove over to the pay station by the kerosene tank to take the message. He caught up again in a minute and called to Doc, "A drunken nigger is headed this way in a Chevrolet and the sheriff wants I should stop him."

About that time here come the Chevrolet and started to pass the procession, wobbling back and forth as if it had the blind staggers. You may well know the nigger

was drunk or he wouldn't have passed a funeral. Uncle Benny cut out of line and took out after him. When he saw who was chasing him, the nigger turned around and headed back the way he'd come from. Uncle Benny was gaining on him when they passed the hearse. The bird-dogs begun to take an interest and rared up, barking. What does Uncle Benny do but go to the side of the Chevrolet so the nigger turns around—and then Uncle Benny crowded him so all he could do was to shoot into line in the funeral procession. Uncle Benny cut right in after him and the nigger shot out of line and Uncle Benny crowded him in again.

I'll declare, I was glad old lady Weller wasn't alive to see it. She'd had no use for Uncle Benny, she'd hated a nigger, and she'd despised dogs so to where she kept a shotgun by her door to shoot at them if one so much as crossed her cornfield. And here on the way to her burying, where you'd figure she was entitled to have things the way she liked them, here was Uncle Benny chasing a nigger in and out of line, and seven bird-dogs were going *Ki-yippity-yi! Ki-yippity-yi! Ki-yippity-yi!* I was mighty proud the corpse was no kin to me.

The Old Hen was plumb mortified. She put her hands over her face and when the Ford would swerve by or cut in ahead of us, Doc and me could see her swaying back and forth and suffering. I don't scarcely need to say Uncle Benny was enjoying hisself. If he'd looked sorrowful-like, as if he was just doing his duty, you could of forgive him. Near a filling-station the

Chevrolet shot ahead and stopped and the nigger jumped out and started to run. Uncle Benny stopped and climbed out of the Ford and drew his pistol and called "Stop!" The nigger kept on going.

Now Uncle Benny claims that shooting at niggers in the line of duty is what keeps him in practice for bird-shooting. He dropped a ball to the right of the nigger's heel and he dropped a ball to the left of it. He called "Stop!" and the nigger kept on going. Then Uncle Benny took his pistol in both hands and took a slow aim and he laid the third ball against the nigger's shin-bone. He dropped like a string-haltered mule.

Uncle Benny said to the man that ran the filling-station, "Get your gun. That there nigger is under arrest and I deputize you to keep him that-a-way. The sheriff'll be along to pick him up direckly."

He cut back into the funeral procession between us and the hearse, and we could tell by them wicked blue eyes he didn't know when he'd enjoyed a burying like old lady

Weller's. When we got back from the burying, he stopped by Will's garage. The Old Hen was giving him down-the-country.

She said, "That was the most scandalous thing I've ever knowed you to do, chasing that nigger in and out of Mis' Weller's funeral."

Uncle Benny's eyes begun to dance and he said, "I know it, wife, but I couldn't help it. 'Twasn't me done the chasing—it was the Model-T."

Doc got in to it then and sided with the Old Hen. He gets excited, the way fat men do, and he swelled up like a spreading adder.

"Benny," he said, "you shock my modesty. This ain't no occasion for laughing nor lying."

Uncle Benny said, "I know it, Doc. I wouldn't think of laughing nor lying. You didn't know I've got that Ford trained? I've got it trained to where it'll do two things. It's helped me chase so many niggers, I've got it to where it just naturally takes out after 'em by itself."

Doc got red in the face and asked, real sarcastic, "And what's the other piece of training?"

Uncle Benny said, "Doc, that Ford has carried me home drunk so many times, I've got it trained to where it'll take care of me and carry me home safe when I ain't fitten."

Doc spit half-way across the road and he said, "You lying old jay-bird."

Uncle Benny said, "Doc, I've got a pint of moonshine, and if you'll come go camping with me to Salt Springs this evening, I'll prove it."



The Old Hen spoke up and she said, "Benny, Heaven forgive you for I won't, if you go on the prowl again before you've cleared the weeds out of my old pindar field. I'm a month late now, getting it planted."

Doc loves Salt Springs crab and mullet as good as Uncle Benny does, and I could see he was tempted.

But he said, "Benny, you go along home and do what your wife wants, and when you're done—when she says you're done—then we'll go to Salt Springs."

So Uncle Benny and the Old Hen drove off. Doc watched after them.

He said, "Anyways, cutting the fool at a burying had ought to last Benny quite a while."

I said, "You don't know him. Cutting the fool don't last him no time at all."

I was right. I ain't so special wise a woman, but if I once know a man, I can come right close to telling you what he'll do. Uncle Benny hadn't been gone hardly no time, when somebody come by the garage hollering that he'd done set the Old Hen's pindar field on fire.

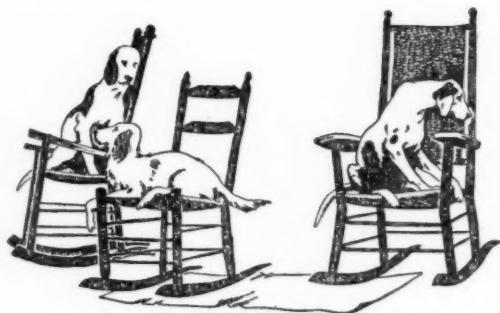
I said to Doc, "What did I tell you? The last thing in the world was safe for that woman to do, was to turn him loose on them weeds. He figured firing was the quickest way to get shut of them."

Doc said, "Let's go see."

We got in his car and drove out to Uncle Benny's place. Here was smoke rolling up back of the house, and the big live oak in the yard was black with soldier blackbirds the grass fire had drove out of the pindar field. The field hadn't had peanuts in it since fall, but bless Katy, it was full of something else. Uncle Benny's wife had it plumb full of setting guinea-hens. She hadn't told him, because he didn't like guineas.

Far off to the west corner of the field was the Old Hen, trying to run the guineas into a coop. They were flying every which-a-way and hollering *Pod-rac! Pod-rac!* the way guineas holler. All the young uns in the neighborhood were in the middle of the field, beating out the grass fire with palmettos. And setting up on top of the east gate, just as unconcerned, was Uncle Benny, with them two little horns of white hair curling in the heat. Now what do you reckon he was doing? He had all seven of them bird-dogs running back and forth retrieving guinea eggs. He'd say now and again, "Dead—fetch!" and they'd wag their tails and go hunt up another nest and here they'd come, with guinea eggs carried gentle in their mouths. He was putting the eggs in a basket.

When the commotion was over, and the fire out, and everybody gone on but Doc and me, we went to the front porch to set down and rest. The Old Hen was wore out. She admitted it was her fault not letting Uncle Benny know about the setting guinea-hens. She was about to forgive him setting the field a-fire, because him and the bird-dogs had saved the guinea eggs. But



when we got to the porch, here lay the bird-dogs in the rocking chairs. There was one to every chair, rocking away and cutting their eyes at her. Their coats and paws were smuttied from the burnt grass—and the Old Hen had put clean sugar-sacking covers on every blessed chair that morning. That settled it. She was stirred up anyway about the way he'd cut the fool at the burying, and she really set in to quarrel at Uncle Benny. And like I say, it turned out to be the last piece of quarrelling she ever done.

She said to him, "You taught them bird-dogs to rock in a rocking-chair just to torment me. Ever' beast or varmint you've brought home, you've learned to cut the fool as bad as you do."

"Now wife, what beast or varmint did I ever learn to cut the fool?"

"You learned the 'coon to screw the tops off my syrup cans. You learned the 'possum to hang upside down in my cupboards, and I'd go for a jar of maybe pepper relish and put my hand on him. . . . There's been plenty of such as that. I've raised ever'thing in the world for you but a stallion horse."

Doc said, "Give him time, he'll have one of them stabled in the kitchen."

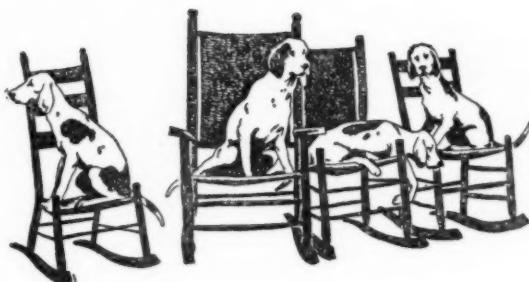
"Bird-dogs is natural to have around," she said, "I was raised to bird-dogs. But it ain't natural for 'em to rock in a rocking-chair. There's so terrible many of them, and when they put in the night on the porch laying in the rocking chairs and rocking, I don't close my eyes for the fuss."

Uncle Benny said, "You see, Doc? You see, Mis' Dover? She's always quarrelling that me and the dogs ain't never home at night. Then when we do come in, she ain't willing we should all be comf'table."

"We just as good to go on to Salt Springs, Doc. Wait while I go in the house and get my camping outfit and we'll set out."

He went in the house and came out with his camping stuff. She knowed he was gone for nobody knew how long.

We walked on down to the gate and the Old Hen followed, sniffling a little and twisting the corner of her apron.



"Benny," she said, "please don't go to Salt Springs. You always lose your teeth in the Boil."

"I ain't lost 'em but three times," he said, and he cranked up the Model-T and climbed in. "I couldn't help losing 'em the first time. That was when I was laughing at the Yankee casting for bass, and his plug caught me in the open mouth and lifted my teeth out. Nor I couldn't help it the second time, when Doc and me was rassling in the rowboat and he pushed me in."

"Yes," she said, "and how'd you lose 'em the third time?"

His eyes twinkled and he shoved the Ford in low. "Cuttin' the fool," he said.

"That's just it," she said, and the tears begun to roll out of her eyes. "Anybody with false teeth hadn't ought to cut the fool!"

Now I always thought it was right cute, the way Uncle Benny fooled Doc about the trained Ford. You know how the old-timey Fords get the gas—it feeds from the hand-throttle on the wheel. Well, Uncle Benny had spent the day before old lady Weller's funeral at Will's garage, putting in a foot accelerator. He didn't say a word to anybody, and Will and me was the only ones knowed he had it. Doc and Uncle Benny stayed three-four days camping at Salt Springs. Now the night they decided to come home, they'd both had something to drink, but Uncle Benny let on like he was in worse shape than he was.

Doc said, "Benny, you better leave me drive."

Uncle Benny pretended to rock on his feet and roll his head and he said, "I've got that Model-T trained to carry me home, drunk or sober."

Doc said, "Never mind that lie again. You get up there in the seat and whistle in the dogs. I'm fixing to drive us home."

Well, I'd of give a pretty to of been in the back seat with them bird-dogs that night when Doc drove the Ford back to Oak Bluff. It's a treat, anyways, to see a fat man get excited. The first thing Doc knowed, the Ford was running away with him. The Ford lights were none too good, and Doc just did clear a stump by the road-side, and he run clean over a black-jack sap-

ling. He looked at the hand throttle on the wheel and here it was where the car had ought to be going about twenty miles an hour and it was going forty-five. That rascal of an Uncle Benny had his foot on the foot accelerator.

Doc shut off the gas altogether and the Ford kept right on going.

He said, "Something's the matter."

Uncle Benny seemed to be dozing and didn't pay no mind. The Ford whipped back and forth in the sand road like a 'gator's tail. Directly they got on to the hard road and the Model-T put on speed. They begun to get near a curve. It was a dark night and the car-lights wobbling, but Doc could see it coming. He took a tight hold of the wheel and begun to sweat. He felt for the brakes, but Uncle Benny never did have any.

He said, "We'll all be kilt."

When they started to take the curve, the Model-T was going nearly fifty-five—and then just as they got there, all of a sudden it slowed down as if it knowed what it was doing, and went around the curve as gentle as a day-old kitten. Uncle Benny had eased his foot off the accelerator. Doc drawed a breath again.

It's a wonder to me that trip didn't make Doc a nervous wreck. On every straightaway the Ford would rare back on its haunches and stretch out like a grayhound. Every curve they come to, it would go to it like a jack-rabbit. Then just as the sweat would pour down Doc's face and the drops would splash on the wheel, and he'd gather hisself together ready to jump, the Ford would slow down. It was a hot spring night, but Uncle Benny says Doc's teeth were chattering. The Model-T made the last mile lickety-brindle with the gas at the hand-throttle shut off entirely—and it coasted down in front of Will's garage and of its own free will come to a dead stop.

It was nine o'clock at night. Will was just closing up and I had locked the candy and cigarette counter and was waiting for him. There was a whole bunch of the men and boys around, like always, because the garage is the last place in Oak Bluff to put the lights out. Doc climbed out of the Ford trembling like a dish of custard. Uncle Benny eased out after him and I looked at him and right away I knowed he'd been up to mischief.

Doc said, "I don't know how he done it—but dogged if he wasn't telling the truth when he said he had that blankety-blank Model-T trained to carry him home when he ain't fitten."

Will asked, "How come?" and Doc told us. Will looked at me and begun to chuckle and we knowed what Uncle Benny had done to him. I think maybe I would of let Uncle Benny get away with it, but Will couldn't keep it.

"Come here, Doc," he said. "Here's your training."

I thought the bunch would laugh Doc out of town. He swelled up like a toad-fish and he got in his car without a word and drove away.

It's a wonderful thing just to set down and figure out how many different ways there are to be crazy. We never thought of Uncle Benny as being really crazy. We'd say, "Uncle Benny's cutting the fool again," and we'd mean he was just messing around some sort of foolishness like a daggone young un. We figured his was what you might call the bottom kind of craziness. The next would be the half-witted. The next would be the senseless. The next would be what the colored folks call "mindless." And clear up at the top would be what you'd call cold-out crazy. With all his foolishness, we never figured Uncle Benny was cold-out crazy.

Well, we missed Uncle Benny from Oak Bluff a day or two. When I came to ask questions, I found he'd gone on a long prowl and was over on the Withlacoochie River camping with some oyster fishermen. I didn't think much about it, because he was liable to stay off that-a-way. But time rocked on and he didn't show up. I dropped by his house to ask the Old Hen about him. She didn't know a blessed thing.

She said, "Ain't it God's mercy we've got no young uns? The pore things would be as good as fatherless."

And then a few days later Doc came driving up to the garage. He got out and blew his nose and we could see his eyes were red.

He said, "Ain't it awful! I can't hardly bear to think about it."

Will said, "Doc, if you know bad news, you must be carrying it. Ain't nothing sorrowful I know of, except the Prohi's have found Philbin's still."

Doc said, "Don't talk about such little accidents at a time like this. You don't mean you ain't heard about Benny?"

The bunch was there and they all perked up, interested. They knowed if it was Uncle Benny, they could expect 'most any news.

I said, "We ain't heard a word since he went off to the west coast."

"You ain't heard about him going crazy?"

I said, "Doc, you mean being crazy. He's always been that-a-way."

"I mean being crazy and going crazy. Pore ol' Benny Mathers has gone really cold-out crazy."

Well, we all just looked at him and we looked at one another. And it came over the whole bunch of us that we weren't surprised. A nigger setting by the free air hose said, "Do, Jesus!" and eased away to tell the others.

Doc blew his nose and wiped his eyes and he said, "I'm sure we all forgive the pore ol' feller all the things he done. He wasn't responsible. I feel mighty bad, to think the hard way I've often spoke to him."

Will asked, "How come it to finally happen?"

Doc said, "He'd been up to some foolishness all night, raring through some of them Gulf coast flat-woods. Him and the fellers he was camping with was setting on the steps of the camp-house after breakfast. All of a sudden Uncle Benny goes to whistling, loud and shrill like a jay-bird. Then he says, 'I'm Sampson,' and he begun to tear down the camp-house."

Will asked, "What'd they do with him?"

Doc said, "You really ain't heard? I declare, I can't believe the news has come so slow. They had a terrible time holding him and tying him. They got in the doctors and the sheriff and they taken pore ol' Uncle Benny to the lunatic asylum at Chattahoochie."

Doc wiped his eyes and we all begun to sniffle and our eyes to burn. I declare, it was just as if Uncle Benny Mathers had died on us.

I said, "Oh, his pore wife—."

Will said, "We'll have to be good to him and go see him and take him cigarettes and maybe slip him a pint of 'shine now and again."

I said, "The way he loved his freedom—shutting him up in the crazy-house will be like putting a wild-cat in a crocus sack."

Doc said, "Oh, he ain't in the asylum right now. He's broke loose. That's what makes me feel so bad. He's headed this way, and no telling the harm he'll do before he's ketched again."

Everybody jumped up and begun feeling in their hip pockets for their guns.

Doc said, "No use to try to put no guns on him. He's got his'n and they say he's shooting just as accurate as ever."

That was enough for me. I ran back of the counter at the garage and begun locking up.

I said, "Doc, you're a sight. Tain't no time to go to feeling sorry for Uncle Benny and our lives and property in danger."

Doc said, "I know, but I knowed him so long and I knowed him so good. I can't help feeling bad about it."

I said, "Do something about it. Don't just set there, and him liable to come shooting his way in any minute."

Doc said, "I know, but what can anybody do to stop him? Pore man, with all them deputies after him."

Will said, "Deputies?"

Doc said, "Why, yes. The sheriff at Ocala asked me would I stop along the road and leave word for all the deputies to try and ketch him. Pore ol' Benny, I'll swear. I hated doing it the worst way."

I scooped the money out of the cash register and I told them, "Now, men, I'm leaving. I've put up with Uncle Benny Mathers when he was drunk and I've put up with him when he was cutting the fool. But the

reckless way he drives that Ford and the way he shoots a pistol, I ain't studying on messing up around him and him gone cold-out crazy."

Doc said, "Ain't a thing in the world would stop him when he goes by, and all them deputies after him, but a barricade acrost the road."

I said, "Then for goodness' sake, you sorry, low-down, no-account, varminty white men tear down the wire fence around my chicken yard and fix Uncle Benny a barricade."

Doc said, "I just hated to suggest it."

Will said, "He'd slow down for the barricade and we could come in from behind and hem him in."

Doc said, "It'll be an awful thing to hem him in and have to see him sent back to Chattahoochie."

Will said, "I'll commence pulling out the posts and you-all can wind up the fencing."

They worked fast and I went out and looked up the road now and again to see if Uncle Benny was coming. Doc had stopped at the Standard filling-station on his way, to leave the news, and we could see the people there stirring around and going out to look, the same as we were doing. When we dragged the roll of wire fencing out into the road we hollered to them so they could see what we were doing and they all cheered and waved their hats. The word had spread, and the young uns begun traipsing bare-footed down to the road, until some of their mammies ran down and cuffed them and hurried them back home out of the way of Uncle Benny. The men strung the fencing tight across the road between the garage on one side and our smoke-house on the other. They nailed it firm at both ends.

Doc said, "Leave me drive the last nail, men—it may be the last thing I can do for Benny this side of Chattahoochie."

I talked the men into unloading their guns.

"He'll have to stop when he sees the barricade," I said, "and then you can all go in on him with your guns drawed and capture him. I just can't hear to a loaded gun being drawed on him, for fear of somebody getting excited and shooting him."

Doc wiped the sweat off his forehead and he said, "Men, this is a mighty serious occasion. I'd be mighty proud if you'd all have a little snort on me," and he passed the bottle.

"Here's to Uncle Benny, the way we all knowed him before he went cold-out crazy," he said.

And then we heard a shouting up the dirt road and

young uns whistling and women and girls screaming and chickens scattering.

"Yonder comes Uncle Benny!"

And yonder he came.

The Model-T was swooping down like a bull-bat after a mosquito. The water was boiling up out of the radiator in a foot-high stream. The seven pieded bird-dogs were hanging out of the back seat and trembling as if they craved to tell the things they'd seen. And behind Uncle Benny was a string of

deputy sheriffs in Fords and Chevrolets and motor-cycles that had gathered together from every town between Oak Bluff and Ocala. And Uncle Benny was hunched over the steering wheel with them two tufts of goat-horn hair sticking up in the breeze—and the minute I laid eyes on him I knowed he wasn't one mite crazier than he ever had been. I knowed right then Doc had laid out to get even with him and had lied on him all the way down the road.

It was too late then. I knowed, whatever happened, there'd be people to the end of his life would always believe it. I knowed there'd

be young uns running from him and niggers hiding. And I knowed there wasn't a thing in the world now could keep him out of Chattahoochie for the time being. I knowed he'd fight when he was taken, and all them mad and hot and dusty deputies would get him to the lunatic asylum quicker than a black snake can cross hot ashes. And once a man that has cut the fool all his life, like Uncle Benny, is in the crazy-house, there'll be plenty of folks to say to keep him there.

It was too late. Uncle Benny was bearing down toward the garage and right in front of him was the barricade.

Doc hollered, "Be ready to jump on him when he stops!"

Stop? Uncle Benny stop? He kept right on coming. The sight of that chicken-wire barricade was no more to him than an aggravation. Uncle Benny and the Model-T dived into the barricade like a water-turkey into a pool. The barricade held. And the next thing we knowed, the Ford had somersaulted over the fencing and crumpled up like a paper shoe-box and scattered bird-dogs over ten acres and laid Uncle Benny in a heap over against the wall of the smoke-house. I was raised to use the language of a lady, but I couldn't hold in.

"Doc," I said, "you low-down son of a —."

He said, "Mis' Dover, the name's too good. I've killed my friend."

Killed him? Killed Uncle Benny? It can't be done



until the Almighty Hissself hollers "Sooey!" Uncle Benny was messed up considerable, but him nor none of the bird-dogs was dead.

The doctor took a few stitches in him at the garage before he come to, and tied up his head right pretty in a white bandage. We left Will to quiet the deputies and we put Uncle Benny in Doc's car and carried him home to the Old Hen. Naturally, I figured it would set her to quarrelling. Instead, it just brought out all her sweetness. I can guess a man, but I can't guess another woman.

"The pore ol' feller," she said. "I knowed he had it coming to him. What the devil throws over his back—I knowed he'd kill hisself in that Ford car, cutting the fool and prowling. The biggest load is off my mind. Now," she said, "now, by God's mercy, when it did come to him, he got out alive."

She began fanning him with a palmetto fan where he lay on the bed, and Doc poured out a drink of 'shine to have ready for him when he come to. Doc's hand was trembling. Uncle Benny opened his eyes. He eased one hand up to the bandage across his head and he groaned and grunted. He looked at Doc as if he couldn't make up his mind whether or not to reach for his pistol. Doc put the 'shine to his mouth and Uncle Benny swallowed. Them wicked blue eyes begun to dance.

"Doc," he said, "how will I get home when I'm drunk, now you've tore up my trained Ford?"

Doc broke down and cried like a little baby.

"I ain't got the money to replace it," he said, "but I'll give you my car. I'll carry the Little Giant line of remedies on foot."

Uncle Benny said, "I don't want your car. It ain't trained."

Doc said, "Then I'll tote you on my back, anywhere you say."

The Old Hen let in the bird-dogs, some of them limping a little, and they climbed on the bed and beat their tails on the counterpane and licked Uncle Benny. We felt mighty relieved things had come out that way.

Uncle Benny was up and around in a few days, with his head bandaged, and him as pert as a woodpecker. He just about owned Oak Bluff—all except the people that did like I figured, never did get over the idea he'd gone really crazy. Most people figured he'd had a mighty good lesson and it would learn him not to cut the fool. The Old Hen was as happy as a bride. She was so proud to have the Ford torn up, and no money to get another, that she'd even now and again pet one of the bird-dogs. She waited on Uncle Benny hand and foot and couldn't do enough to please him.

She said to me, "The pore ol' feller sure stays home nights now."

Stay home? Uncle Benny stay home? Two weeks after the accident the wreck of the Model-T disappeared from behind the garage where Will had dragged it. The next day the seven bird-dogs disappeared. The day after that Doc and Uncle Benny went to Ocala in Doc's car. Will wouldn't answer me when I asked him questions. The Old Hen stopped by the garage and got a Coco-Cola and she didn't know any more than I did. Then Will pointed down the road.

He said, "Yonder he comes."

And yonder he came. You could tell him way off by the white bandage with the tufts of hair sticking up over it. He was scroched down behind the wheel of what looked like a brand-new automobile. Doc was following behind him. They swooped into the garage.

Will said, "It's a new second-hand body put on the chassis and around the engine of the old Ford."

Uncle Benny got out and he greeted us.

He said, "Will, it's just possible it was the motor of the Model-T that had taken the training. The motor ain't hurt, and me and Doc are real hopeful."

The Old Hen said, "Benny, where'd you get the money to pay for it?"

He said, "Why, a daggone bootlegger in a truck going from Miami to New York bought the bird-dogs for twenty-five dollars apiece. The low-down rascal knowed good and well they was worth seventy-five."

She brightened some. Getting shut of the bird-dogs was a little progress. She walked over to the car and began looking around it.

"Benny," she said, and her voice come kind of faint-fied, "if you sold the bird-dogs, what's this place back here looks like it was fixed for 'em?"

We all looked, and here was a open compartment-like in the back, fixed up with seven crocus sacks stuffed with corn-shucks. About that time here come a cloud of dust down the road. It was the seven bird-dogs. They were about give out. Their tongues were hanging out and their feet looked blistered.

Uncle Benny said, "I knowed they'd jump out of that bootlegger's truck. I told him so."

I tell you, what's in a man's nature you can't change. It takened the Old Hen thirty years and all them goings-on to learn it. She went and climbed in the front seat of the car and just sat there waiting for Uncle Benny to drive home for his dinner. He lifted the bird-dogs up and set them down to rest on the corn-shucks cushions, and he brought them a pan of water.

He said, "I figure they busted loose just about Lawtewy."

The Old Hen never opened her mouth. She hasn't quarrelled at him from that day to this. She was hornswoggled.



Five New Empires

A SUCCESS OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE

By Paul Hutchinson

Neither autarchy nor "internationalism" is the real course of world economy. The late-lamented economic conference indicates a new trend



THE London economic conference did not fail. It succeeded. It succeeded in doing something that the politicians—in their public moments—and the experts and the encompassing cloud of journalists did not expect, or admit that they desired. But it succeeded, nevertheless. It succeeded in making it inevitable that the world will shortly be carved into five great economic empires. These empires will rule the affairs of mankind in peace for at least a decade to come. The conference could not have accomplished what it ostensibly set out to do. But I am convinced, after watching it in action, that it could not have accomplished anything of more lasting importance than it did.

At the close of its six weeks of discussion the conference did not so much adjourn as expire. Its life ebbed away, a victim of some incurable species of pernicious anaemia. Mr. Cordell Hull, with nominal support from the British, maintained to the end that there would be a resurrection; that after his own government had worked out the initial stages of its internal inflation program, and the other governments had reviewed the position which the negotiations in the conference had revealed, there would follow a reassembling out of which epochal achievements would emerge. Most of those who still lingered about the corridors of the Geological Museum in South Kensington during those dismal closing hours listened to such prophecies of a glad tomorrow with a skepticism which they scarcely bothered to disguise. But both those who talked of success in the future and those who accounted failure already complete had allowed themselves to be deceived by outward appearances. There was, in truth, no need for a reassembling of this conference. This conference had



done its work. It had opened the doors on a new period in history.

Some observers of the ebb and flow of the London discussions sensed, at least dimly, the new divisions of world commerce which were forecast in this gathering of the nations. Thus Winston Churchill, with his gift for the memorable phrase, pictured in the House of Commons the

prospect of a "sterling convoy" steaming on a course nearly parallel with that of the United States, while both fleets plowed "uncharted seas" without regard for the nations whose currency was still anchored to gold. The likelihood of a world divided into sterling, gold, and managed currency blocs grew to be a familiar gambit of conversation in the closing hours of the conference.

Yet this was probably too temporary an interpretation. The negotiations at London did, to be sure, demonstrate that the world is at present divided into gold, sterling, and dollar (managed currency) areas, with interests and problems peculiar to each. It is by no means certain, however, that the same nations will be attached to the same currency standards six months or a year hence. Especially as regards the states of continental Europe, it is possible that pressure of events will force changes in the currency basis in several instances within the next few months. Paradoxical as it may seem, therefore, at a juncture when the anachronistic nature of most of our political arrangements is being revealed, the economic conference achieved historic importance by showing that our world is about to be regrouped in five economic empires that will be mainly political in their composition. To these, in order that the prospect may be easily grasped, may be given the names of the American, the British, the Continental, the Russian, and the Japanese blocs.

To say that the delegates went to London to secure some sort of universal economic agreement and went home having laid the groundwork for the organization of five separate and largely self-contained economic empires will, to many, seem equivalent to saying that the conference was a failure. But these are the people who still labor under the illusion which must have controlled the minds of those who called the conference together. This is the illusion that there is some common root for all the varied kinds of economic trouble that have tormented men recently in every part of the world, and that there must therefore be a common solution which can be found only by resort to common action. That blessed word "international"—used always to take in the entire planet—has surrounded itself with such an aura of sanctity and alleged miracle-working power that, prior to the London conference, there was, among liberals, slight recognition of its limitations. Only that which was "international" was thought to be adequate to our contemporary needs, and, conversely, any scheme that could be called "international" was believed to be, *per se*, both right and sure of success. As a consequence, it was thought that if only the representatives of sixty-six nations—I think it was sixty-six; sometimes the orators spoke of sixty-four and sometimes of sixty-seven; there were at least thirty states represented at the conference whose presence meant absolutely nothing one way or another—could be brought together in one room, some way would be found for bringing prosperity back to all the earth.

It took less than three weeks to demonstrate, through actual experience, that the idea was an illusion. The demonstration came about not on account of any particular nefariousness on the part of the delegates. Most of them were honestly desirous of doing something in behalf of world trade recovery—provided that in the process they did not have to surrender such recovery as their own nations had made, or were making. But the demonstration came through the discovery that there were no common problems, that there were no common aims, that the responsibility borne by the delegates was not a common responsibility, and hence that there could be no common methods of action.

As a minor, but revealing, illustration of this lack of a common basis, take the debate that broke out during the closing days of the conference on the future of the wine industry. It was after the dream of a general economic treaty had evaporated, but while it was still thought that trade agreements covering the production and distribution of certain products might be arranged. As was natural, the French fostered a proposal for an international campaign to push the drinking of wine, since that would mean prosperity for a large part of France. However, the Scandinavians immediately served notice that they took their temperance cam-

paigns far too seriously to subscribe to propaganda on behalf of intoxicants. This brought Portugal to the front, indignant that wine should be regarded as anything but a food. Whereupon Egypt took the platform to observe that, whether food or not, wine is certainly forbidden to orthodox Moslems, and so a Moslem state could naturally have nothing to do with such a proposal. And there you are! Or rather, where are you?

Now, to say that there could have been no completely inclusive agreements arrived at under the prevailing conditions may be to surrender those "international ideals" for which our liberals have been whooping these many years. But why cry for the impossible? Why not face the facts? And most of all, why not see that the result which actually came out of the conference—the decisive shove which the nations have had toward the formation of a few great economic blocs—may contribute as much and as quickly to the making of a world in stable equilibrium as any political or economic arrangement so far proposed for the organization of the post-war world?

II

It is hard to tell the story of the London conference in any connected form, for surely no more disconnected and floundering international gathering ever met. Judged on the basis of its actual program, it must be regarded as a triumph of mismanagement. There had been, to be sure, some preliminary conversations, and the experts enlisted by the League of Nations—under whose auspices the affair nominally occurred—had worked out an agenda as detailed as a navigator's tide-chart, and, to ninety per cent of the delegates, about as comprehensible. President Roosevelt, about a month before the conference convened, issued a statement giving his understanding of the main purposes for which it was to be held. By the time the conference opened he had reason to regret even that small amount of definiteness. The opening speeches showed that the nations had very little idea why they had met, very few concrete proposals to make looking toward a world economic policy, and that the whole affair was at the mercy of the inspiration of the moment.

Unfortunately, there proved to be no inspiration. The accidental incidence of the launching of the Roosevelt inflation policy in the United States with the opening of the sessions in London made the future course of the American government the only topic about which the delegates really cared a hang. Accordingly, such negotiations as actually took place quickly shook down to a series of variations on one main theme: "What does the United States think about this?" And progress in debating that question was necessarily limited, since even the American delegates were never quite sure, when

they started for the conference hall in the morning, what the official position of their government would be by night. (I say this without implying any criticism of the American government. Mr. Roosevelt is compelled, in the nature of the case, to play his present economic tune by ear, improvising as he goes along. But this state of affairs did not make it any easier for an American delegation to negotiate on the other side of the Atlantic, and with nations that were looking for treaties that would—like the Ottawa agreements—be guaranteed to remain in force for a fixed term of years.) After the President had exploded his bombshell of July 3, the debate virtually switched to a discussion of the personality of Mr. Roosevelt. Was he a Moses or a Machiavelli? And from there on to the adjournment, it was largely a confusion of tongues.

Perhaps the best way in which to make the proceedings take on some semblance of coherence to the American public is by approaching them from the standpoint of the experiences of the American delegation. There, I suppose, the proper starting point would be with the formation of that delegation, concerning which a good deal has been said, not all of it of a laudatory nature. Yet while it may be admitted that the delegation, regarded as a whole, did not impress one with the diplomatic resources of the United States, and while it was obvious that local and partisan considerations had played a part in filling up the list, there was no particular reason to cavil at the American representation.

As a matter of fact, the situation proved such that no delegation—"not even if it had been made up of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson, Grover Cleveland, and Theodore Roosevelt," I heard William Allen White say one day—could have done much better than this delegation did. Several of the members soon proved themselves a match in negotiation for the delegates sent by other nations, and I think any disinterested observer would have agreed that, before many weeks had passed, the leader of the American delegation, Cordell Hull, had become the most respected member of the conference. The patent integrity of his character did more than all other factors combined to hold the affair together when the mingled anger and fear of the gold bloc over the implications of the Roosevelt policy were on the point of blowing everything to bits.

So we can start out with the American delegation as it was, neither very good nor very bad, but a body of well-meaning, hard-working men, entirely surrounded by experts from the various government departments. On the boat, I am told by those who went to London with the delegation, there were daily discussions with the press over what the American policy was to be. Since the delegates had sailed immediately after an extended conference with the President, it seems fair to

assume that they thought they knew what he wished them to try to accomplish. These objectives, they declared, were mainly three—the same three that had been named in Mr. Roosevelt's mid-May statement: stabilization of currencies, lowering of trade barriers, and concerted efforts to raise international price levels.

Of these three, the one that lay closest to the heart of Secretary Hull was obviously the second. Three months before he entered the cabinet, Mr. Hull had proposed a general ten per cent reduction in world tariffs. He had been placed at the head of this delegation while a known advocate of this method for dealing with the economic crisis. He had been assured that, by the time he reached London, the President would have obtained tariff bargaining powers from Congress which would make it possible to effect agreements with other nations. If Cordell Hull went to London to accomplish any one thing, he went there to bring down the world's tariff walls. Otherwise, there was no particular reason for his being on the delegation, much less its chief.

In mid-ocean the delegation received its first jolt. As Congress neared its closing hours, the President found his program in danger of a legislative jam. The bonus boys were again on the warpath, and the resentment of Congressmen against supinely accepting executive dictation was coming closer and closer to the surface. It became evident that the President must choose between taking the legislative grants he could get passed in a hurry, or a rough-and-tumble, perhaps drawn-out fight, in which his hitherto unprecedented prestige would stand in danger of serious impairment. Naturally, he chose the former. But that involved abandoning the plan to ask Congress for power to negotiate lower tariffs, since party leaders were unanimous in warning Mr. Roosevelt that this was one of the measures that would be adopted only after a terrific fight, if at all.

It may not have been hard for Mr. Roosevelt, in Washington, to give up the attempt to obtain blanket powers of tariff negotiation. But for Mr. Hull and his associates, on the high seas bound for a world conference, the radio dispatch telling of the President's decision must have come like a thunder-clap. What were they to do? It is a little hard to tell exactly what they did do. But after they reached London some sort of resolution was framed proposing a 10 per cent reduction in tariffs on the part of all nations. To this resolution the name of Mr. Hull in some fashion became attached. It went into the general hopper and was printed in the list of proposals submitted to the conference. Naturally, the press greeted it as an American proposal. Apparently this annoyed somebody very much, for there followed a flurry of denials that this was really an American proposal or that Mr. Hull meant it in any more than a personal and tentative fashion, or that any-

body meant to push it seriously. They didn't. The resolution went to a committee, from which it never emerged.

That was the end of the lowering of tariff barriers. More serious, because it became involved in issues of prestige, was the fate which overtook the idea that the conference might work out some sort of stabilization of currencies. Here, too, was an aim that the American delegates, while en route to London, thought that they had been sent to seek. Another American resolution on the subject was fed into the conference hopper, and right up to the President's blast of July 3 all the members of the American delegation (including Professor Moley) seemed to expect that some sort of American bow in the direction of the idea of currency stabilization would be made.

What happened to the American delegation in its efforts to keep on friendly terms with the stabilization stalwarts I do not pretend to know. I am told that one delegate kept a detailed diary of what went on during those tumultuous days when the Americans spent most of the night on the transatlantic telephone and most of the day trying to explain their resulting shifts in position to a horde of pressmen. If such a document should ever be published, it will provide some extraordinarily interesting reading. But here I can only give my guess as to what went on, built up partly out of conversations with those who were in the midst of the confusion.

To begin with, the Americans had to adjust themselves to the fact that the situation in the United States had changed radically between the time when Mr. Roosevelt agreed to Mr. MacDonald's Easter-week plea for a speedy convening of the conference, and mid-June, when the conference got under way. Inflation had set in; commodity prices had begun to move upward; a huge public works program, to be financed by an expanded currency, had been authorized; a drastic rise in the wage level, required by industrial codes under government supervision, was imminent. Money as a commodity in foreign commerce or exchange had, therefore, become of minor moment, but money as a factor in internal recovery had assumed a vital importance. This importance required that it should be extremely fluid, and thus instantly susceptible to variations in the government's aims. American participation in any immediate stabilization scheme thus became out of the question.

At the same time, however, the French became panicky over their own currency outlook. As the determination of the Americans to resist stabilization grew clear, the dollar went on a speculative spree that will be long remembered by those who were unlucky enough to be caught in Europe with American money in their pockets. With England off gold and with the other great creditor nation, the United States, not only off

gold but apparently off on an inflationary joyride, France began to worry about its ability to maintain its own gold allegiance, and to lose hope that many of its lesser European satellites would long continue to maintain theirs. Accordingly, the French press began to ring the changes on the contrast between the selfish isolationism of America and the noble French spirit of economic co-operation, as shown by the French desire to see all currencies brought back to the gold standard and stabilized there.

In point of fact, of course, there was not a hair's-breadth of difference between the self-interest which had brought the United States to an elastic currency and the self-interest which made the French champion a return to gold. Knowing that, the contemplation of the French—who had not hesitated to sabotage Mr. Hoover's moratorium policy a year before—in the rôle of moralizers on the "selfishness" of the United States was too much for Mr. Roosevelt's equanimity. He determined to have word reach London in such a way as to preclude misunderstanding that the United States regarded all schemes for stabilization, if related to gold, as merely playing the French game, a game which the United States did not propose to play, either then or at any discernible future.

Into this situation came Mr. Roosevelt's apostle of economic nationalism, Professor Moley. It was little short of a messianic coming. For days the newspapers devoted columns to preparing for the great arrival. Finally there came the climactic moment when the professor, accompanied by his personal press representative, Mr. Herbert Bayard Swope, arrived. And after that followed a perfect frenzy of conferences—conferences with Mr. Hull, conferences with Sir Frederick Leith Ross, conferences with the rest of the American delegates, conferences with M. Bonnet, conferences (by telephone) with Mr. Baruch, conferences with Signor Jung, conferences with the press, conferences with Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. MacDonald—conferences, conferences, conferences.

To what purpose? God knows. But perhaps, after breaking the news to the French that there was nothing doing on stabilization, Professor Moley found them so upset that it seemed wise to him—as it certainly did to some of the other Americans—to pour a little mollifying oil on the waters. Remember that before the conference opened the United States had ruled out consideration of debts; as it opened it had virtually ruled out tariffs; now it was ruling out currency. Could something still be done to soothe the delegates, particularly the French, who were beginning to be more than acid in their references to the part which America was playing? The result seems to have been the excessively meaningless document which, on July 1, Professor Moley sent to Mr. Roosevelt for approval.

A careful study of that document, which was later made public, will show that all it actually said was that stabilization on a gold basis at some later and indefinite date would be nice if the nations could ever get around to it, and that meantime they hoped their nationals would not take advantage of their obvious opportunities to gamble in the fluctuating exchange rates. Somewhere off the Maine coast, however, Mr. Roosevelt must have read between the lines evidences of weakening on the part of his personal negotiator under the pressure of Gallic flattery. M.

Herriot had gone home from Washington in April thinking that Mr. Roosevelt, when he said one thing, really meant another. The President did not propose to take chances on a further misunderstanding of that sort. Accordingly, on July 2 he not only let it be known that he would have nothing to do with Professor Moley's adventure in diplomatic vacuity, but on the following day he gave out what must rank close to farthest north in the matter of plain speaking in an official international document.

I was at the Geological Museum when that Roosevelt statement began to unroll from the automatic typewriters. Most of the American correspondents had gone to the Claridge Hotel, where Mr. Hull had shouldered the unhappy task of making public the thoughts inspired in Mr. Roosevelt at sight of the Moley-sponsored formula. It was far more instructive, however, to be at the conference hall, where one could see how the other delegates took it. It was as tense a moment as ever dramatist created for a second-act curtain. As those stinging phrases kept clicking off the machine—"singular lack of proportion," "excuse for the continuance of basic economic errors," "specious fallacy," "old fetishes,"—men looked at one another, first with incredulity, then with mounting resentment, then with despair. Could it be that they were actually being belabored with such words as these? And if they were, what could be the purpose behind it?

Well, that was the end of currency stabilization. So far as London was concerned it was also the end of Professor Moley. And it came very near being the end of the conference. It surely would have been but for the heroic work done by Mr. Hull during the forty-eight hours following the President's statement, with Mr. Chamberlain and the representatives of certain of the British domin-

ions, notably Canada, lending a helping hand. Mr. Hull and Mr. Chamberlain had a certain amount of face-saving to do, for it would have been a diplomatic blunder of the first order to have let the world gain the impression that the American President had wrecked the conference or that the British prime minister had been guilty of stupidity in holding it when it was held. Beyond all that, however, both men had plenty of reason for seeing that the conference did not break up in anger. That objective, at least, they achieved.

From the 4th of July until the adjournment, three weeks later, the conference can therefore be said to have been mainly engaged in finding a dignified way of dying. Most of the conspicuous foreign delegates, with the exception of the Americans, went home. Those who remained took to going to garden parties; one night everybody went to the movies. The battalions of journalists melted away. The London newspapers began tucking their conference news on the back pages, reserving their important space for discussions of leg theory in cricket bowling. In the lull, during which it was agreed to discuss nothing over which a real row might develop, attempts were made to secure a number of separate agreements between interested nations gov-

erning the production and distribution of specific commodities. One of these, dealing with the future of silver, may prove of some importance. It should at least provide Senator Pittman, its principal negotiator, with another re-election from his grateful Nevada constituents.

Of course, it was too late for the conference to redeem its reputation by resort to such devices. Effective as some of them might be in improving the looks of certain bad patches on the economic map, they were too limited in scope to obscure the mood of cynicism which had been created by the spectacular defeats suffered in trying to cope with some of the general problems. When the conference broke up, therefore, it was universally accused of having failed, and most of its members were ready to acknowledge this failure. Yet I am convinced that, out of this very failure, if such it is to be called, a major advance toward a stable world order will come.

III

This is the line of reasoning by which I justify this confidence in the end-results of the conference. The



delegates carried away from London three principal ideas:

1. That the internal recovery program of the United States is probably more important for the economic welfare of the world than any other thing now happening, and that the United States was therefore justified in protecting that program at London against any possibility of its being interfered with from outside.

2. That despite all talk of interdependence, the economic world is much too big, too complicated, and too diversified to admit being handled on the basis of universal trade agreements.

3. That because universal agreements are out of the question, the most direct road to economic recovery is by minimizing foreign trade and focussing attention on the internal development of the various nations, since the more self-contained a nation's life the less dependent it is for economic health on its trade relations with some other bargainer.

All of which reduces to the probability that America is about to set the pace for the economic actions of the rest of the nations, and that even in the case of such nations as find it impossible to copy the American program, there will shortly arise the necessity of adopting some program calculated to produce the same sense of economic independence.

Before ever the delegates went to London there were a few voices raised in the United States protesting that the idea of economic internationalism is a fallacy, and that economic self-containment is the goal toward which the nations of great size should work. Conspicuous among these protestors were Dean Wallace B. Donham, of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, and Mr. Lawrence Dennis, formerly of the State Department, but now most widely known for his provocative book, *Is Capitalism Doomed?* Soon after the realities of the conference began to appear, these heretics received a reinforcement of immense weight from an unexpected quarter when Mr. John Maynard Keynes came to their support. And by the time the conference was closing even the Tory majority in the House of Commons was almost ready to vote, at the urging of Mr. Churchill, Colonel Amery, Sir Robert Horne and others, for a British imitation of the American example.

It is by far too great a simplification of the program these men have in mind to call it economic nationalism. There were, to be sure, threats from the French in the closing days of the conference that, by the development of the resources of their colonies and dependencies, a completely self-contained French economic unit could and would be created. Such threats are not to be taken too seriously. Mr. Keynes has said, in *The New Statesman*, that "there is no prospect for the next generation of a uniformity of economic system throughout the

world, such as existed, broadly speaking, during the nineteenth century," and this leads him to advocate "increased national self-sufficiency." But there is a great gap between an increase in national self-sufficiency and its complete attainment.

The likelihood is that the United States will go farther toward adopting a program of economic nationalism, as a result of its experiences at London, than any other nation, and will be more successful in approximating that goal than will any other. But even the United States cannot become completely self-contained. It must still import certain things—tin, coffee, silk, to name a few examples—and there are far more practicable ways of brightening the future of the cotton planter and the machinery manufacturer than by cutting them off from all foreign markets. No, even though the United States can approximate a considerably greater measure of economic self-sufficiency than in the past, there will remain various points at which wisdom will dictate a strengthening of the American position by entering into special trade relations with specific countries. Mr. Roosevelt showed his comprehension of the realities in this direction when, before the conference could adjourn in London, he invited the representatives of Argentina and Chile and one or two other South American states to discuss direct trade agreements with him in Washington.

That is why it is misleading to talk of American economic nationalism as having been fostered by events at London, and nearer to the truth to speak of the birth of an American economic empire. For an economic empire there will be, dominated by the United States, but drawing into its orbit probably most of the countries of Latin America, and possibly even Canada. (So possibly that most Englishmen can hardly discuss the prospect without considerable emotion.) Such an empire will even have its African outpost, for the rubber plantations which Mr. Firestone has been cultivating in Liberia have a vital relationship to the security of the American position.

Completion of the American economic empire will force the British to bring into being a similar body. Here the groundwork has been laid, first, in the tradition connected with the old political empire; second, in the blatant "empire preference" campaign which the press lords, Beaverbrook and Rothermere, have popularized in the penny press; and third, in the willingness to go to great lengths to hold colonial trade which the mother country displayed when making the Ottawa agreements. Yet this British economic empire will by no means be coterminous with the political organization on which the sun never sets. That it may include Argentina, Chile, and certain other South American nations in which British capital is heavily invested, Mr. Roosevelt's eagerness to woo those countries indicates.

It will take in the Arabian peninsula and Persia. Into it, moreover, the Scandinavian states will almost inevitably go. And out of it, as has been said, there might go Canada and even—a prospect that is sending cold chills down all the spines in Whitehall—India.

The third great bloc which the formation of the first two will make inevitable will be made up of the nations of the continent, with their various colonial satellites. The most active agent in promoting its formation is likely to be France, and in many respects it will fulfil, when formed, the dream of a United States of Europe which M. Briand championed at Geneva in 1929. It would be unfair, however, to speak of it as a French economic empire. The part which Italy will play will hardly be secondary to that of France. Germany's Nazis are not likely to require much urging to go into the scheme, for it gives them a chance to arrange that practical co-operation with France which their best leaders realize they require in a field where public passion need not be placated, while they can keep up, for home consumption, the semblance of political implacability. Belgium, likewise, with her immense resources in Africa, and Holland, with her riches in the East Indies, will be entitled to the status of full partners in the continental group.

Russia will continue to be, as she has hitherto been forced to be, an economic world to herself. She may absorb a little more of the economic resources of Central Asia; it is not entirely beyond the bounds of possibility that she might draw a considerable portion of China under her influence. But the most reasonable expectation is that she will go ahead about as she now is, with a sixth of the world's land surface, a hundred and sixty million people, and a new ideal and program as the raw materials out of which to make a new kind of entity in world affairs.

That leaves the economic empire of the Far East—a bloc which may be slower in forming than the others, but which will be pushed toward completion just as fast as the Japanese can manage it. That Japan has immensely improved its prospects for making such leadership effective by its occupation of Manchuria is clear. That it can extend its economic sway over China (or at least most of China), Siam, and probably the Philippines and the Malay States, seems likely. But what

most of the world does not realize is that Japan is at this moment so close to having gained control over the economic life of India that only by the drastic intervention of the British authorities has that consummation been postponed. When the Oriental bloc is complete, it is at least an even bet that India will be found in it, rather than in the group controlled by England.

IV

Economic agreements were impossible at London, because common interests were lacking. But such economic empires as are foreshadowed in these reactions from the London disillusion will come into being precisely because their members will discover their common interests, and as their history lengthens this sense of a community of fate will grow. So that, although founded today on a few trade compacts of limited scope—the British economic empire, for example, may not go for a time much beyond the Ottawa agreements—they will find themselves tomorrow, normally and easily, welding their whole economic life into a single interrelated order, largely self-contained within the limits of the bloc.

This is not world economic internationalism. It frankly gives up the idea of a mutually organized economic world as being at present beyond even approximate attainment. It does not unify the whole world; it divides the whole world, and I expect that it will make those divisions very deep. But within those divisions it should unite. Within those divisions it should promote a general rise in the levels of well-being. Within those divisions it should do away with an enormous number of the disputes which now exacerbate international life. Since it should accomplish those ends, and since there is no reason why, for many years to come, each of these economic empires should not live in its own orbit without trespassing on or interfering with any other, the final outcome of these measures that the nations will take because they found at London that other measures were beyond attainment, will be on the side of world stability, prosperity, and peace. For which reason, I contend, the London conference should be accounted a success.

*In the series of SCRIBNER's biographies of men who have influenced the modern world: next month—Henry George, *Unorthodox Economist*, by Albert Jay Nock; in coming numbers—Admiral Mahan, the Father of Sea Power, by Louis M. Hacker; The Genial Lenin, by William C. White; Thorstein Veblen, by Ernest Sutherland Bates; Thomas Paine, by V. F. Calverton; Godkin of the Post, by Henry F. Pringle.*

The "Great" Frenchman

A new Interpretation of Ferdinand de Lesseps and the Panama Scandal

By Roger Burlingame

Ferdinand de Lesseps, once the idol of the French people, became the central figure in a scandal of international proportions. The American version and the French version of the "affaire de Panama" differ widely. This, the fifth of SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE biographies, is not only a colorful story of a fascinating life but a document of considerable historical importance

CONTINENTS which God hath joined together," said Philip the Second of Spain, misquoting Scripture for his purpose, "let no man put asunder." With this commandment, Philip rang down the curtain on the geographical renaissance of Spain and postponed the Panama Canal for three centuries.

Sailing through the Canal today between the happily divorced continents, we think of it as a pleasing miracle. Its value is calculable. It cuts off some 8000 miles of the journey from New York to San Francisco; 30 million tons of ships pass through it in a year, paying more than 25 million dollars in tolls; it has revolutionized coastwise trade; it has given us a military and naval base in Central America. Its importance to other nations is equally obvious. But it appears as a miracle because it cuts through mountains, subdues a violent river, creates a vast artificial lake; yet it was built, apparently, in ten years by the United States Government. Like many modern miracles, its supernatural appearance vanishes upon investigation. When we find that it existed on paper in the sixteenth century, so that, truly, it took three hundred years; that fifty years of diligent surveys preceded the first digging; that ten years of actual work was done, not by the United States but by a bold Frenchman harassed by enemies, the story becomes less miraculous but richer in color.

The first plan followed close on the heels of Columbus and came out of the urge which in those days possessed all navigators, to reach the East by sailing west. The rich lands of Central America had not broken the pull of the Indies. So when Cortez and his cousin, Alvaro Ceron, had sailed for twelve years along the



coast of Darien looking in vain for a way through, Ceron advanced the amazing suggestion of digging one. He went farther; he drew a tracing to show where it should go. It is a pity that Ceron's name is now nearly lost to history, for his tracing, placed on a modern map, fits almost exactly the line of our canal.

Ceron died before he got beyond the tracing. A few years later Charles V, who lived in the tradition of Ferdinand and Isabella, ordered the survey of the famous Chagres Valley. The governor of Costa Firme made the survey and shook his head.

"There are mountains," he said.

"There are mountains," agreed the historian, Gomara, a swashbuckler, too, in spirit, "but there are also hands . . . To a king of Spain seeking the wealth of Indian commerce, that which is possible is also easy."

Now Charles V, listening to this bold advice, was quite capable of ignoring the governor's shaking head or even of cutting it off if it shook too much but unfortunately at that moment Charles died, and Philip, climbing his throne, saw the wealth of the Americas, and forgot India.

Philip the Second was a small, stubborn, and cautious man. The tales of heroism, the new lines traced in blood over the curving earth, which had stirred Charles and Isabella, left him unstirred. Gold was his god but he revered it as a possession; he did not dare it as a stake. To Philip, wealth was not a means but an end. He was a hoarder.

He must have been held in disdain by the high romantic hearts of Castille. Yet, in a curious way he was necessary, at the moment, to the progress of the world. If the continents between were to be exploited, Span-

iards must be diverted from India. To divert them, Philip thought, the barrier of Darien must be kept intact, and he went characteristically about the business of keeping it so. He concealed his real motive and, divine injunctions being powerful in those days of the Inquisition, he adjusted one of them to fit the circumstances.

For three hundred years, no one broke it. In the meantime the map of the world had changed considerably. The empire of Spain had dwindled to nothing. The Americas bristled with republics. The whole civilized world was settling down to great new works of peace: steamships, railways, and telegraphs, and the world was growing smaller in consequence. It was the urge to make it smaller still that brought about, at last, the divorce of the continents.

Philip's commandment was broken by a Frenchman. He did not quite succeed. But the fact that he tried had a profound effect on history.

II

If Ferdinand-Marie comte de Lesseps had not tried to dig a canal through Panama in 1879, many things would not have happened. A billion and a half French francs would have remained in the woollen stockings of half a million French peasants to be passed on, in the French manner, to new generations. Many hundreds of zealous young men who died in feverish swamps would have fulfilled happy destinies in their native land. Dozens of French politicians and business men who suffered stains on their reputations would have gone on in dignity to old age with their characters unbesmirched. The whole of France would have been spared a scandal which weakened the nation at its foundations and from which it had hardly recovered in a decade.

These things France would have been spared. In America, the republic of Colombia might have remained intact, the republic of Panama might never have existed. But most significant from the world view-point is the fact that if Ferdinand de Lesseps had not tried his enterprise, the passage west to the Indies would have been not a canal of Panama but a canal of Nicaragua.

It is fascinating, in the study of history, to speculate on the might-have-beens and, especially, to trace great events to small beginnings. It is exciting to reflect that, for example, but for the turning green of a Russian soldier when he was confronted by an equally frightened Frenchman, Napoleon would have gone back from Austerlitz or that if, on a certain June day, a summer cold had prevented a certain archduke from taking the air in Sarajevo, we should have been spared an Armageddon.

Continuing this somewhat dangerous pastime, we might say, for instance, that if Ferdinand de Lesseps had not been an expert horseman, the Panama Canal would never have been dug. That if Mehemet-Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, had not had a son who was inordinately fat, the Panama Canal would never have been dug. That if, in 1848, Napoleon III had not played a two-faced game in his relations with the Papal States of Rome, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans would now be joined by a canal through Nicaragua. These conclusions have a far-fetched sound, yet when we examine the chain the links seem inextricable. The danger lies in ignoring the human qualities of the man who made and connected them.

III

Perhaps no one in modern times has known praise as ecstatic and condemnation as universal as this Frenchman experienced in the space of his eighty-odd years. For Ferdinand de Lesseps was a world hero. He was honored by kings and governments and poets; by peasants, by beggars and children in the street. Certainly no one except a statesman or a soldier was so honored in the century he almost lived through. Yet he went in dishonor to his grave at the end of it: he had been sentenced to prison and branded as a common swindler. The calumny has stuck, only a few of his critics have seen him as an idealist surrounded by a pack of greedy and vicious wolves.

Visitors to Panama are shown old engines and machines: long obsolete now and grown over by the vines of the jungle and, as these things are pointed out, there is a laugh at the expense of the man who came to be called, grimly, "The Great Undertaker." The most fantastic stories are told: of the Isthmus running with wine, of the flourishing of vice and corruption in the construction camps, of palaces occupied by managers and engineers, of retinues of servants, of stables full of horses and carriages, of every kind of luxury derived as graft from a company financed by poor peasants. We hear of a general madness pervading the whole enterprise; of an attitude of "Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die," so that if you should believe these stories, you must believe, too, that in the ten years' occupation of Lesseps' company, no work was done whatever.

Yet if we investigate carefully another story appears. We find that, in fact, 30 million cubic yards of excavation immediately useful to the American canal had been done by the French. Photographs of the Culebra Cut in mid-career in 1887 are little less impressive than those of our army at work in 1912. Tributes paid by the first of our own engineers to the brave effort of the French make the stories of wine, women, gambling,

and indolence a little more difficult to believe. And the indisputable records of the havoc of the yellow fever make it seem a miracle that in ten such deadly years any effective digging was done at all.

Then, if we investigate further we will discover that the great French battle for a passage west to the Indies was lost, not in Panama, but in Paris. We will unearth a scandal there so juicy and with roots so deep that the famous Dreyfus case is almost insignificant beside it. It is by no means an easy matter to get to the bottom of. Once there, we find a network of intrigue involving almost a whole parliament and several ministries; bankers, statesmen, editors, socialists, dynamiters, spies, and, in the background, a few half-hidden, sinister figures pulling the wires.

In the foreground stands Lesseps. His eyes are forever westward just as once, earlier in his career, they looked with the same faith to the east. Never, until it was too late, did he look behind him to see the wires pulled and the money jingling into the pockets of the blackguards who pulled them. His eyes were on the sun; he did not see the obstacles between. Unhappily the sun was setting; he was an old man; his faith was blind.

He was a romantic figure, this stocky, determined, charming Frenchman. He was too romantic, a little too dramatic and picturesque to escape the special kind of slander that descended on him. His very charm was used against him and the grandeur of his gestures made him an easy target.

IV

Ferdinand de Lesseps was born in Versailles in 1805. The prolific family was blasé about his birth. "Matthew," wrote Grandfather Martin, "spends his time growing fat and having children. His wife has just been delivered of a big and beautiful boy; he already has two boys and a girl . . ." The jocose letter was unfair to Ferdinand's father. If Matthew grew fat it was not from underwork. The interval at Versailles was a brief rest from hard effort in the service of his country. He had moved busily from place to place in the consular service—he had gone as far as the remote United States—and to represent a nation whose government was subject to such convulsive changes was no job to grow fat on.

From the beginning the Lesseps family had devoted themselves to patriotic activity. In the old days they had borne arms for their king; in the new they bore port-



folios. They were brave, adventurous, restless, and curious about foreign lands and very much aware of the rights and interests of alien peoples.

Dominic de Lesseps, under Louis XV, began the diplomatic tradition. His nephew Bartholomew spiced his diplomatic doings with voyages of exploration. He went to Kamchatka with the famous Lapérouse. He travelled thence by dog-sled across five thousand miles of Siberia, Russia, and Germany. There were thirteen in the party and Bartholomew came back alone. The others were dead. When he reached Versailles—not, presumably, still on the sled but certainly still in his arctic costume, Louis the Sixteenth was so excited that he forbade him to remove a single garment until he had presented him as a miracle to the court.

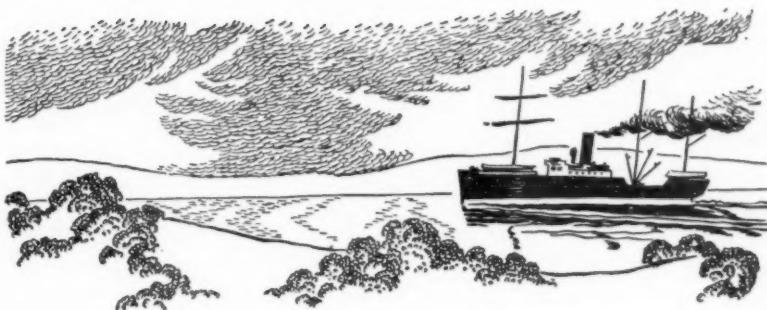
Ferdinand, in his boyhood, listened for hours to stories told by this romantic uncle and they influenced him more directly than the other rich Lesseps lore, for there was the hero himself to be looked at. But there was an abundance of heroes besides Bartholomew.

The Lesseps were, on the whole, civilized and charming men. Their persuasiveness broke down the barriers erected by czars, capricious or weak-minded kings, bourgeois communes, ambitious first consuls, and vain-glorious emperors. They faced risks equanimously; they smiled on insurrections, wars, revolutions, and plagues of Egypt and their smiles brought adorers to their feet. Their morality was never warped by the delicious attraction they exerted upon women. They were born, lived, loved, raised prodigious families, and died in an untainted aura of heroism.

It was a grand inheritance for Ferdinand.

V

It would be unwise, in a record largely devoted to a man's achievement after he was seventy, to dwell too long upon his boyhood. But in any case there is little material. Even the intimate biographers are summary with it. Perhaps, if his sun had set in greater glory they would have been more meticulous. All we know is that he was robust, enduring, muscular, and hard. He was a good fencer, he could fight with his fists, he could



walk tirelessly, and on horseback he was part of the horse.

His first vivid appearance is at twenty-five, in Egypt, mounted on an almost unmanageable stallion. There are Arabs about, watching him. He sits the stallion as easily as he sat his pony in Saint Germain. He is the horse's master; his wrists give and take easily with the furious motion of its head; the stallion rears and plunges but Ferdinand is relaxed in the saddle. It is a brilliant performance.

It is something of a feat to astonish Arabs by horsemanship. Ferdinand astonished them and they never forgot it. He won their enduring favor. The viceroy applauded him openly and his welcome in Egypt was complete.

"*Voici*," says Ferdinand in his memoirs, "*Voici l'origine de Suez.*"

Lesseps was one of those who like to trace large results to small origins. In other places in his memoirs, however, he says again "*Voici l'origine de Suez.*" He says it about the failure of his mission to Rome in 1849. And he says it also about a mustard seed which was dropped in his mind on his first arrival in Egypt—before the adventure of the stallion.

He had come to Alexandria as a consular apprentice. He had been held up at quarantine and the consul had sent him books to read during the delay. One book was the memoirs of Lepère, Napoleon's engineer who had surveyed the Isthmus of Suez with the intent of a canal. So the stallion as "*l'origine*" turns out like most such supposed causes to be merely a link in a long inevitable chain.

It is, nevertheless, an important link: the chain would be, in fact, no good without it. The events following which depended on it were certainly the reason for Ferdinand de Lesseps' digging the Suez Canal.

In Egypt the stage was conveniently set for Ferdinand's entrance. On the throne of the viceroy sat Mehemet-Ali, an Albanian of dominant character and small education. What little he could practise of reading and writing, of calculating or science, had been taught him by Matthew de Lesseps. Matthew, with the backing of France, had virtually placed him upon the throne

and France was interested in making that throne a power. So the Lesseps family had become intimates of the viceroyal household and the viceroy was predisposed to welcome the son.

He had several sons of his own. One of them, Saïd, was a good boy but with an unhappy tendency to fat which greatly alarmed his father. Mehemet-Ali scolded and abused this son until the

poor child wept; he scolded the tutors until they were at their wit's end but whenever the boy got on the scales he weighed more. The tutors walked him and ran him and forbade him sweets and made him climb the walls of forts but Saïd went on gaining.

Every week his father had him brought and weighed in his presence and a scene would follow. One day Ferdinand was there while this was happening and Saïd's tears distressed him.

"I can do something for him," he said to Mehemet-Ali. "Will you let me try?"

"Do what you like with him," said Mehemet-Ali, "but he must lose weight. I don't want something grotesque on the throne that I have established."

Unconsciously, then, while the sweat rolled off Prince Saïd; while he galloped over the desert on a camel, learned like his master to ride wild stallions, and went through hours of fencing and gymnastics, Ferdinand de Lesseps was preparing the way for his two great enterprises: for the great triumph and the great disaster of his life.

For Saïd emerged from his training slim and graceful and, furthermore, grateful to his master. His friendship lasted.

Twenty years later Saïd Pasha, no longer grotesque, ascended the throne of Egypt. Ferdinand de Lesseps wrote to congratulate him and Saïd answered, "Come to Cairo." Ferdinand went: the Suez Canal was in his pocket.

VI

Lesseps, in his memoirs, and his biographers state these facts simply. They ignore the subtle thing behind them.

It must have been hard for a boy softened by luxury to have gone through the paces Prince Saïd went through, yet at the end, he was Ferdinand's friend. The physical result is accounted for by the master's science, but the gratitude, what of that? What was the imponderable which moved in all the men who worked for the "Grand Français" and brought them, even while they suffered, in gratitude to his feet?

"*Le Charme*" Ernest Renan called it, "that supreme gift which, like faith, works miracles."

The word, so magic in Renan's context, is feeble by itself and in English almost meaningless.

"*Le charme*," he said in his eulogy of Lesseps before the French Academy, "Le charme a ses motifs secrets mais non ses raisons définies. C'est une action toute de l'âme. La vraie raison de votre ascendant, c'est qu'on devine en vous un cœur sympathique à tout ce qui est humain une passion véritable pour l'amélioration des êtres. On devine en vous ce 'Misereor super turbas' (J'ai pitié des masses) qui est le sentiment de tous les grands organisateurs."

This quality as Ferdinand had it was innate and inscrutable.

The twenty years between Lesseps' training of the fat prince and the beginning of Suez cannot all be skipped. In them he lost his wife, his child, his career, his faith in his government. In them, out of his very bitterness the project of Suez matured.

No doubt it was Lesseps' "*charme*" that led the little Napoleon in 1849 to send him to Rome as ambassador in a mission so delicate that no ambassador in the world could have pulled it off. Ferdinand himself did not understand it and it is doubtful if the true intent of his government ever became clear to him. It is certain that he was deeply embittered by it and that it caused him to abandon forever the diplomatic service of a country which so meanly rewarded him.

The bald facts are these. Louis Napoleon, not yet emperor, was angling for power. In those dubious days it was necessary for him to propitiate the republicans in Paris; yet, to achieve his designs for the future, he must also keep the support of the Catholic party in the provinces.

Rome had driven out the Pope, established a republic, and was defended by the cowboy Garibaldi and his intrepid army. The Pope, having fled to Naples, was urging all the Catholic nations to send armies to help him get back to Rome and temporal power.

A tentative army had been landed by France at Civitavecchia and was being held there under command of a harassed general named Oudinot who had not the faintest idea what he was intended to do. The army had, in fact, been sent to propitiate the Pope, but such a storm of protest arose in the Chamber against any attack on the sister republic of Rome, that Napoleon decided to leave it there at least until the elections which, if he played the game right, would assure him of power.



In the meantime, to quiet the tempest in the Chamber (and give time for secret reinforcements to be sent to Oudinot) he sent a special ambassador to Rome to make promises to Mazzini and the leaders of the Roman republicans. The ambassador was Ferdinand de Lesseps.

It was an adroit and treacherous double play. Lesseps spent two weeks promising Mazzini in the name of France that Rome would not be attacked. At the end of the two weeks, having signed and sealed his promises to Mazzini, Lesseps received an abrupt telegram ordering him back to Paris and immediately after (the siege guns having arrived at Civitavecchia), Oudinot was ordered to enter Rome.

Lesseps at once asked for an explanation. Naturally, he never got it. Men of Napoleon's breed who are trying to become emperors seldom explain their political moves. It would, in fact, have been disastrous to explain, so every one kept silence and Lesseps sent in his resignation from the diplomatic service. He never re-entered it.

Again "*Voice l'origine de Suez!*" Not the origin this time, truly, but the period, as it were, of gestation.

In the sad years that followed, Ferdinand withdrew into the country and engaged apparently in farming. But in the intervals of his work on the land and, especially, in the long, difficult days that followed the death of his wife and child, he brooded, as far as he was capable of brooding, upon the defeat of his life work.

The brooding of Ferdinand de Lesseps differed from the usual performances of this exercise. Defeat is impossible for such a man to grow accustomed to. We may imagine that the actual sitting and thinking about what had happened to him occupied less time than the speculation about what was to happen next.

It was not long, therefore, before the humiliation of defeat gave way to a passion for vindication. In the ashes the spark burned strong. His people would see the flame leap up again; they would see this poor discredited ambassador lift himself and France to a plane of glory of which they had never dreamed. But how? The question goaded him. How?

In his study in the deep quiet of La Chesnaye, lay the



book by Lepère, the engineer of Bonaparte. In the same study was a globe. It is easy to picture this man swept out of his despair by the colossal power of Lépère's idea; rising from his desk and walking with his firm, impatient step to his microcosm of the earth, whirling it under his fingers and putting one of them on a thread of land. . . .

His pencil drew the line and Mazzini, Oudinot, Louis Napoleon and all the little politics of France rose like a mist before his eyes and disappeared.

VII

The importance, to this narrative, of the Suez Canal lies principally in its effect upon the character of the man who, in his old age, was to attack the dread jungles of Panama. The technical difficulties were, in general, less than the diplomatic. Suez was sandy, there were no hills, there were the useful Bitter Lakes and the only serious technical obstacle was a difference in the tides of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Lesseps won a victory here over his engineers who insisted that locks were necessary. No engineer himself, he saw a practical way of overcoming this difficulty which the technicians, blinded by rules and precedents, could not see. Lesseps' triumph over the engineers of Suez in this matter was a fundamental reason, some twenty years later, for the breakdown of the Panama project. It made him overconfident in his belief in the superiority of what he called "practical men" over trained technical experts.

The diplomatic troubles over Suez were far more serious than any of its mechanics. But here Lesseps was on his own ground. All his persuasiveness, all his magnetic charm, all his calm control were brought into play and no diplomatist ever did a better job.

With the viceroy it was plain sailing. As soon as he arrived in Egypt on Saïd's invitation, he prepared a memorandum to be presented to the ex-fat boy at the psychological moment. It was a masterpiece of persuasion. Yet it was, too, robust and direct; its flattery was never fulsome. It is interesting to us because at the end he speaks of Panama on which the United States was at

that moment casting speculative eyes: What a pity it would be, he wrote in effect, if that way should be opened to commerce while this more important thread of land remained closed!

The viceroy welcomed Lesseps to Egypt by presenting him with a fine Arab mare—a souvenir of old times. He then invited him on a long trip through the desert to

Cairo. It must have been a gay and impressive expedition with the cavalry escort and the viceroy's enormous retinue.

Lesseps immediately began to astonish the Arabs with his horsemanship. They cheered and applauded him. The day he presented his memorandum he made a miraculous jump. "You ought by good right to have broken your neck," said Renan years later before the Academy, "but in the East a rash act often answers as well as a wise one. Your hardihood excited universal admiration, and that same day the charter was signed."

The viceroy's advisers were not a bit interested in the Suez Canal. But seeing Lesseps jump a parapet without either killing the horse or losing his seat made them believe that such a man should be granted anything he asked.

When the expedition reached Cairo, the concession was formally drawn up. On the day it was signed there was general celebration in Cairo. The viceroy was in fine spirits and is said to have joked with the American consul, saying: "My canal will be finished before yours!" The only people in Cairo who remained aloof from general rejoicing and seemed cold to the project were the English.

One of the articles of the document stated that before the digging could begin, the concession must be ratified by the Sultan of Turkey. The viceroy felt obliged to pay this deference to his monarch and he felt no doubt of immediate agreement by the Sultan. And if, indeed, the Sultan had been left alone he would certainly have agreed but neither the viceroy nor Lesseps foresaw the dark hand of England.

England's behavior about the Suez Canal must be forever inscrutable. She would be by far the greatest beneficiary of the Canal. Her perversity can be only partially explained by a long habit of foreign politics. The spectacle of a Frenchman conducting an enterprise of this magnitude was, on the face of it, intolerable. The fact, furthermore, that a Frenchman had won the favor of the viceroy of Egypt and was on the point of gaining also the favor of the Sultan of Turkey was,

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Wind Before Evening

A STORY

By David Cornel DeJong

BEFORE the door opened the yard lay undisturbed, with the maples sturdy and solemn and the robins zealous for worms underneath. Even the sparrows sat together in rows, forgetting their nestings and quarrels, and the cat lay round with sleep against the first poppy that bloomed. Still, it was decidedly morning, with the sun easing from the east and the white rooster sometimes mindful of his crowing.

Then the screen door opened and swung back gently against Mrs. Valentine's body as she paused on the doorstep. And when she said to some one behind her in the blackness of the house, "He is still asleep, but he'll awake any minute now, so that you'd better call me as soon as he does," the sparrows rose in unison and whirred to the maples and the robins tripped a few yards farther down the lawn. With her forehead still pleated in apprehension at what she had been saying, Mrs. Valentine looked at the shuddering of a small wind against the peripheries of the heavy maples. The wind then became visible on the south side of the lonely walnut and was gone. She pushed the door again and let it fall back against her, gently, negligently, as if the motion soothed her. When there was no more wind and when her thoughts had almost gone back to worrying about the sleeper in the house, she pursed her lips appraisingly and looking at the sky beneath the maples she said, "We'll have wind before night. We'll sure have wind." She held the door still to listen for an answer, forgetting that flies might come in.

Behind her Nola appeared, her round face set in answer. But first she looked at the sky above the barns.

"Yes, we might at that. It's sure a nice morning, Miss Valentine." Then Nola's interest in the possible evening wind flagged, for she saw the open screen door, even though to her disappointment no flies came in.

"Well, I like wind," Mrs. Valentine said. For no reason she sounded defiant, and when she became aware of this, she noticed that the door was open. "You'd think I was a child, letting hundreds of them," she scolded. But when Nola nodded blandly righteous, she added, "I'd better hurry to my ducks."

Before she had reached the shadow of the maples, she turned around to Nola. "When he does wake up, bring him his tea. Don't let him wait. You know how impatient he got yesterday." Her eyes puckered to a worried gazing past Nola. "But, of course, you know, Nola. You'd better call me right away."

"All right, I'll see to it. But he don't like me, Miss Valentine. He simply don't." Nola's dim smile ended in something challenging.

"Call me at once then," said Mrs. Valentine.

Nola was gone. Mrs. Valentine looked at the sky once more and walked slowly toward the flowers and the cat. She still looked at the sky and stripped a syringa branch of its leaves without knowing what she was doing. She thought of her husband and quite against her will she drew his face before her—a face opening each morning its unwilling eyes; a gaunt face, sunk stone-like into the pillow, demanding in its perpetually unvaried way his morning tea. For two years now—through mornings of gray slanting rain, or the whole earth feasting in the sun, or snow bitter and pure on the branches, it did not matter which—his eyes had followed her petulantly sombre and greedy, till she allayed for a while the impending storm with his cup of tea. Two years. And while she regarded the sky and heard bobolinks jubilant in the pasture, she tried forcibly to push her thoughts from her.

As in respite from her thoughts she sprinkled the handful of syringa leaves over the sleeping cat. Then suddenly she laughed and stooped to rub his soft ear between thumb and finger, while he opened his eyes and yawned ungraciously at her. "It's just as bad for me to stand here thinking like this, as it is for you to lie sleeping on such a morning," she told the cat.

She picked him up and coddled him voluptuously against her chin. "Now we're going to the ducks. What do you say?" She studied the western rim of the pasture beyond which her sons were working. Four sons. "Four of them," she told the cat, when she felt his ardent purring stir through his body. Again she pressed him tightly against her. It was like pressing the morning's happiness to her, for it was very elusive and she needed all of it.

She walked to the duck house. She promised the cat a beautiful day and wonderful things. When she smelled the mayweeds through which she walked, she remembered things almost lost. For a moment she stood dazed and still, listening to the voices of invisible men to horses, and let the cat slide down along her body into the midst of the white flowers, where he remained standing aloof and distant as if she had not held him in her arms for weeks. "Go on, you old scoundrel," she laughed. Catching the playfulness in her voice he suddenly capered with happy kitten leaps in his old body after duck feathers. She ran after him and he leered at her mischievously from behind tree stems and bounced on when she came near. She shouted and laughed and followed him as if he were very young and she young, until she recalled that Nola might be watching. She grew dignified then and said to the cat: "We both ought to be ashamed. And you got me started. But we aren't, are we?" The cat became dignified also and together they went to the ducks, who had heard her voice and made raucous calls in the eager turmoil before their release.

While she fumbled with the latch, she apologized to them, her voice soft and in tune with their now patient watching. "Yes, I know it's a pity, leaving you all cooped up here on a morning like this. And I promise you, some day I'll be sorry for it. Because it isn't necessary at all. Just pure selfishness because I like you. The boys would be glad to let you out." They stood still and listened.

One morning while she was watching the broad white stream of their bodies file past her, she had told herself that their eager life was an antidote against the lame and bitter man inside who was her husband, and whom she had once loved so greatly that she no longer dared to think of those days. Not as long as he lay there mutilated, in half-life.

She swung the little rickety door wide open and the ducks started to stream outside in a white, steady current, curving around the stone from which the cat eyed them loftily. They walked in great haste to the little path that led to the orchard and lifted their heads and shouted to her, their yellow beaks like banners

pointing steadily toward the place where they were going. She laughed contentedly at their hurried march and urged them on: "Come on, boys. You've got to hurry. The day is only fifteen hours long. You must hurry." They shouted back, joyfully. She had always called them boys, for all things lively and joyful were boys to her. Perhaps because she had only had sons, who for her had become all that was youth and eagerness and shouting. Even the cows were boys to her. And the whole incongruity of it all was hers. Perhaps also as antidote.

When the army of ducks was nearly past her, she heard the frantic yelling of Joseph and Benjamin, both so broad and fat that they could not drag their heavy bodies fast enough to be part of the army. She did not know why she had given them those names, unless for the reason that they were the end of a weighty and important line. Now again their voices went almost to wails against the unfairness of their huge and unwieldy bodies. When they were near her she picked them up as she did each morning and evening, one on each arm. They adjusted their broadness comfortably on her bare arms and were silent and consoled. "They're not going to beat us, I tell you," she assured them. By the orchard she lifted them gently over the fence so that they were as near the small pond as the foremost.

For a while she leaned against a cherry branch and watched them. Then she sang a little, something from which the words had lost their sense and sequence. The cat came and sat beside her. She listened for the voices of people but the eagerness of the ducks drowned all distant sounds. Then she heard the screen door



creak, and she knew it was Nola. She waited for Nola's calling before she turned around.

"Miss Valentine," Nola called in that old whine she reserved for distance.

"Well, boys, here I go," she said to the ducks. "Yes," she called to Nola.

Nola came walking toward her. "He's awake, mum, and I brought him his tea. He don't want another thing, he says." She still shouted even though she was close.

"How is he this morning, Nola?" she asked.

"Oh, all right, I guess." Nola answered in a voice which left plenty of leeway on either side. It augured neither well nor ill.

"I've got the ducks in the orchard. I suppose he'll want to sit on the sun porch for a while. It is such a



wonderful morning." She stood somewhat helplessly in front of Nola, not knowing why she explained this again, day after day.

Nola nodded. "Yes, he ought to get some sun this morning."

Then they walked together to the house and through the door into its cool darkness. The cat remained outside watching a June beetle. When Mrs. Valentine had gone in she saw her husband through the open door lying back against the white pillow, his emptied teacup next to him on the little table. Then she put her mouth into a smile and walked toward him. He shut his eyes when he saw her come closer and waited. "How do you feel this morning, Harold? It's a wonderful morning," she said brightly, patting the pillow a bit to one side of his head.

When he held his eyes closed, she went to the window and raised the shade. "I just let the ducks into the orchard," she explained. "It's wonderful out."

"Why can't the boys take care of those ducks?" he said gruffly from his pillow, his eyes still shut and his mouth pulled down again after his speaking.

"Oh, they could, but I like to do it," she explained, as she did each sunny morning, when she had to speak about the ducks.

He lay silent and she stood next to him, waiting. Slowly he opened his eyes and studied her. "It does make a whole lot of difference to me whether there is sunshine or rain, doesn't it?" he said grimly.

"But of course it does. We'll get you all ready and you can lie for a while on the sun porch. It's great out there. I'll come and sit with you, and we can talk about things." She brushed the matted hair from his temples.

He shook her hand away and said, "Talk about what thing? What is there to talk about? Tell me that."

She sighed a little and did not answer him, but started to clear the room and went to the door to tell Nola to bring the water and his wheelchair. Very deliberately and slowly she set about the task of dressing him, with Nola sometimes surly and half-afraid at the door looking at his unwilling face. When she tried to wash his face, he pulled the washcloth from her hands. "I can do that at least." Then she stood back and watched his white hand against the green wash-cloth moving in petulant motions over his face. "You needn't watch me as if I was a school kid," he cried, and he scowled at Nola, who hurried to the kitchen to do something unnecessary.

Slowly and tediously the dressing wound itself off. When she was nearly done she called Nola again and together they lifted him into the wheelchair and finished his dressing. For a moment his hand trailed over the cool flesh of her arm and remained there, but when she paused at his touch and smiled at him, he jerked his face into sudden scowling and said to Nola, "Go on, we don't need you any longer."

When Nola had disappeared, he wheeled himself cautiously out of his room. Mrs. Valentine was going to follow him, but he shook his head, and she returned to the bedroom to straighten things up and to make up his bed. He had stopped his chair in the large living-room when she stooped over to pick up his discarded clothes, and she saw him finger the cord of the floor lamp and sway it. She did not watch him steadily, but kept going with little scurrying motions, for she knew that her watching would make him furious. Then he pushed himself a bit farther and paused in front of the spindle desk where the two oldest boys sometimes made sporadic attempts to systematize their doings by papers and records. He leaned over and studied the photograph of the girl who was the subject of Paul's present and ardent attentions. Still Mrs. Valentine's hands kept on busying themselves and only sometimes she looked at him, her throat filling with anguish and pity. When she stooped over his pillow and trailed her fingers over the hollow where his head had lain and felt the moist warmth of the place, she shuddered a little. At that moment she heard him open the drawer of the desk, and with her hands still giving sound to little patting motions, she watched his lean hand hover for a while above the drawer. Then she suddenly bent lower over the pillow, for she had seen him turn his head toward her. A little later she looked up again at him as she heard his hand in the drawer. Again she

bent hastily over, and she saw him lift Paul's revolver and shift it hurriedly from one hand to the other and then to the pocket of his robe. Her breath and all her being seemed to congeal. She clutched the pillow with taut but impotent hands and stifled a cry that was welling up in her.

Afterward she did not know why she had done this. She did not know now. She was only certain that she had carefully turned her face away when she felt his eyes upon her, to the array of medicine bottles on his dresser. Paul should have been more careful and not have left that gun there, she told herself over and over, without reason and without comfort. But she did not do anything else. She only repeated this one thing, because her thoughts would not formulate, but churned desperately inside of her. She should have cried out and run to him to take the gun away. She should never have allowed Paul to have the gun for pistol practice. She should have done hundreds of active, purposeful, sturdy things; but she did nothing. Her fingers shifted and placed and replaced the bottles and jangled them together busily, while her eyes did not try to meet her eyes in the mirror. Then she heard the movement of his chair over the floor near the sun porch, and very deliberately she set four little brown bottles in a row and went out to help him over the door-step.

When she pushed the chair behind him, her chin very close to his dark hair, she held her breath and cramped her hands. She even looked at the bulge in his pocket and bit her lips and rolled her tongue tastelessly in her mouth. She could prevent it, she even had to, she thought stubbornly, but she did nothing. Instead she pushed him sturdily over the sill into a patch of warm sun near the windows with the ferns and geraniums. He did not look at her. She adjusted the robe over his legs and her hands touched the heavy gun in his pocket. She stooped lower, and when she did look at him, he cast his eyes aside, and looking at the geraniums, he said, "You don't have to sit here with me. It's nice here alone." But the surliness and commanding had gone from his voice, she noticed. She also looked at the geraniums and very intently at a ladybug creeping toward a very scarlet blossom.

"All right," she said, surprised at the evenness of her voice. "I'll come a bit later. I'll run out and do some weeding in the flower garden. Your room can wait." Her voice went on steadily, like an efficient nurse smoothing the way toward his death. But her thought had stopped and she could not look at him. For a space they were silent next to each other, and when the ladybug had reached the crest of the scarlet blossom, she

suddenly turned to go. "You are all right now?" she asked, without looking back.

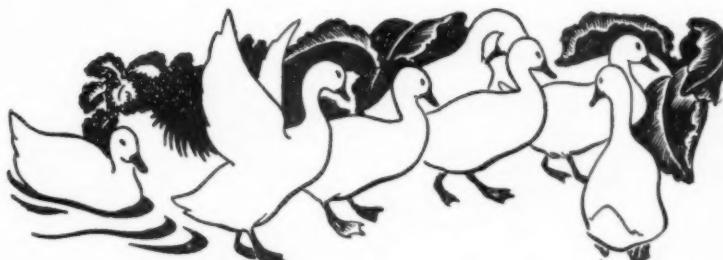
At first he did not answer. Then he said, "Grace, you must really watch yourself in the sun in the garden. You ought to watch yourself," and after some silence, "You must, Grace."

She held her body taut, her ribs pressing against her heart, her breath halted, for not in months had softness come from him. And his voice was totally alien, not even as it had been years ago. She could not answer him while her body was still, but she started to walk, almost run away from him. With the loosening of her muscles in flight her voice was also set free, and she cried, "Oh, no. Oh, no. You should not worry," all the time running away from him, her anguish making her voice thin and fowl-like, so that it was like desperate gaiety.

She went on. In the kitchen she looked at Nola's back bent over the steaming breakfast dishes in the sink and she composed herself. With her voice at a dead level she said to Nola, "I'm going in the garden for a while." She was going to add, "And call me if anything happens," but she could not say that with a steady voice. Therefore she said no more.

Nola said, "All right."

Then she hurried out of the kitchen into the garden. Very methodically she took a hoe in one hand and the rake in the other. Then she stood still, uncertain what to do, her eyes fixed on the one red poppy, her lips against her teeth and her cheeks rigid and sore. Slowly, with a tool in each hand she walked toward the mulberry tree. "A staff in either hand," she said to herself and walked on. Shouts of men to horses rose over the fields. She did not listen. She told herself she was a



murderess, but that seemed not to matter. Beneath the mulberry she laid the tools in parallel lines in the grass and with her face pressed against a cool branch, she waited.

The waiting was not a matter of time. Everything became a matter of climax, beyond which the thoughts failed to penetrate. Her eyes were acutely conscious of little things, of the one orange portulaca in all the red, of the wisps of clouds pulling thinly southward, and of an ant higher up on the mulberry branch. All the

time her ears were intent with fierce listening. There were sounds, but they remained blotted in a background without recall. Once she looked at the sun porch, at a very small angle of it visible from where she stood, with one geranium head behind a slice of window. She looked hastily away. A little later a lean, yellow wasp came close to her eyes and hovered there threateningly. At other times she would have jumped aside, but this time she watched the wasp and wondered vaguely what she would do should it dart for her eyes. But the wasp went away and other things buzzed past, and her forehead grew harder against the branch.

Then the report of the gun came and all her bones and muscles strained together in one breath. She had even known what would follow, she realized then. She had known that Nola's feet would go thumping through the house. She pressed her upper teeth into the branch and repeated to herself, "It is better so, for him, for me, for everybody," because that seemed to be the thing she would have to tell Nola, when she would come to the door. She repeated it faster and faster, her teeth hard and sore in the bark, but when she heard Nola's shriek, she pressed her hands tightly against her breasts and took her mouth from the branch.

Nola came, her hair disheveled, her face flattened in agony and fright, her voice squeezing out of her as if her throat were raw. "Miss Valentine, Miss Valentine. Come, come, he's shot himself," she wailed. Perhaps she had not said that at all, but that was what she expected, words like that. She walked toward Nola, and was conscious that she walked carefully between the hoe and the rake and as carefully between the portulaca and the verbena. Nola wailed on, and she came closer to her, her eyes and lips rigid and went past Nola into the house.

She walked almost primlike, and behind her Nola

sake, perhaps for her own, she gasped and the rigidity went from her body. She walked toward him, put her hand carefully on his fallen head and looked aside hastily when she saw the little bloody hole in his temple. Then she took a handkerchief from his pocket and laid it over the wound and pressed his head upon it and into the pillow. Her hands moved on, unfalteringly but her thoughts had ceased again. She only felt a great relaxation, and when she was through, she looked at Nola, red-eyed in the doorway, and even smiled a little, a strange, squared smile, which was hard against her teeth.

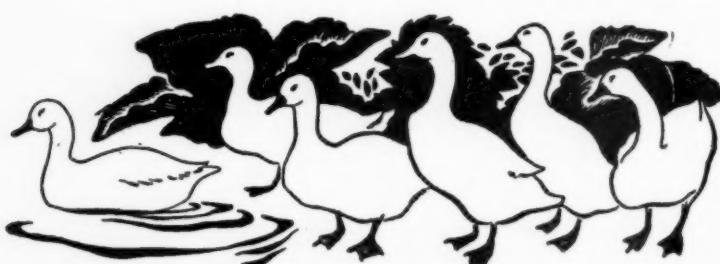
Nola said, "Shall I call the doctor?"

She nodded. And when Nola went to the telephone, she watched the awkwardness of her walking. Then she saw the little white note on the red geranium blossom. She bent over it without touching it, and was aware of its white squareness on the red piling of the petals. She read, "Darling, you must see it is the best thing I did in two years. Bye." She read it again, her lips forming the words, and again. She did not touch it but left it on the red blossom.

Then she heard Nola excitedly loud to the operator and calmly she went to her. "We mustn't stir all the neighbors," she said. "You must calm yourself." And when Nola looked at her with her face twisted, she took the receiver from her and talked to Doctor Weaver herself, in a calm voice, but he recognized her tenseness and said he would come at once. Nola sat sobbing beside the telephone. When she had put the receiver back, she shook the girl's shoulder gently rough and started to say, "You mustn't," but when Nola sobbed louder, she continued instead, "I'll go and ring for the boys," and walked to the back where the bell was.

Everything had become totally rational. She had even noticed by the clock that it was quarter past nine, the time she quite often called the boys for a cup of coffee. When she tugged steadily at the rope of the bell, she thought of this, and she allowed the rope to slur along her side, for this seemed to give her more peace and steadfastness. When the bell was silent, she went outside to meet them. Looking at the clouds, she told herself again that there would be wind by evening. And perhaps by evening she would be able to weep and allow all this tightness in her to sag apart.

She walked slowly along the path to the knoll where the old wagon-shed stood and there she waited. Ten cows lay near, chewing calmly and looking at her. She listened for the voices of her sons, and soon she heard them. Then she bent her head to determine whose voice she heard and to recognize each voice. Paul's would be



stumbled unevenly over rumpled rugs. As she came closer to the sun porch she walked more firmly, as a stern man might go to his execution. Behind her Nola sobbed and muttered unintelligible things. She stood in the doorway and held on to the door posts while she looked at him, and again she knew that this was the way she had known she would find him. But for Nola's

eager and high, perhaps strident in argument. Dale's would be deep and gruff and indistinguishable, Vin's young and with laughter, and Derk's would not come at all, for he would be silent and perhaps a little behind the other three. But only Paul's voice came, and when she lifted her eyes and saw them come around another rolling of the land, she saw that they walked next to each other, all four, dark against all the expanse of daisies in the pasture. She moistened her lips and her heart seemed to flow out toward them, to all four at once, and to all four equally, as they came now, of four even statures and even height and even color. But that was not the way she saw them, for she knew them all apart. When she saw Dale's hands gesturing, she knew that his voice could not come all the way to her, because already a little wind had started to rustle and sough over the pasture.

When they were closer, she rose and stood on the top of the knoll, and they smiled and laughed at her, waving their hands, but their talking went on. They could see no strangeness in her meeting them thus. Soon they would see in their father's death only strangeness—no more, the passing of something which was familiar, but which they hardly loved. It would be disconcerting, and for a while unrecognizable, as if the huge maple, through whose blackness they were passing now, should suddenly not be there. There could be little more, for love and companionship had gone two years ago, and all there had been left was the figure taut and uneasy in the wheelchair or in bed, to whom there was little to say. She did not feel bitter about this. She did not feel anything definite, but thought of these things distantly as if they had been read out of a book.

The four boys were talking about hawks. She heard them mention hawks and their flight and their kinds. And when she stood waiting for them, her face impulsive, she saw them draw apart, two to each side, so that she could walk between them, as they always did. When she looked into the smiles of all four of them, she even felt herself smile. They were by her and talked all at once of coffee and hunger and the hard work and the corn and the wonderful weather, all except Derk, who was looking at the faint smudge of the mulberry bark on her forehead.

Then she turned with them and they walked, two on either side, slowly toward the house, and the union with them was so great and immense that for several steps she could not speak. When they were past the last silent brown cow, she said, "I came out here to tell you something."

They became silent then in their listening and looked at her.

"You must not be frightened. Not disturbed," she went on. And then she paused a little while, for Derk and Dale, who were nearest to her, had each taken one of her arms and had slowed. "Your father is not well." She hesitated again, because she wondered why she had



used those words. "Your father found your gun this morning, Paul." She felt their arms tightening around hers. Paul uttered a sound. "He found the gun, and when he was on the sun porch, he used it on himself. He's gone, he shot himself."

They stood all still in the middle of the path and looked down upon her, for they were taller than she, but their mouths only formed questions and uttered none. She felt their arms leave her arms and she felt them laid over her shoulders and her back. Then they walked to the house, and when Paul shouted impetuously, "It's my fault. I left that gun where he could find it," she said, "Shh, shh," and then too he was silent.

They went on and she said firmly, "It is not your fault. How could it be your fault?" When they came to the gate and had to pause to open it, they had found their voices and their questions came and she answered them, until they reached the door. Then she knew that Derk had asked no question, and she laid her hand in his, and so they walked into the house, she and Derk together, the others in single file behind them. When Nola saw them, she sobbed again.

That afternoon the wind came, first fitfully in the old pines, later with tossing in the top of the elms and the maples. The doctor had come, other arrangements had been made, and all day the four boys had wandered over the house, strange and silent, getting in the way of Nola, fondling the cat exorbitantly, examining the ferns for aphides, doing unnecessary things with clumsy, generous motions, until at last they had sat down together playing cards in a haphazard fashion for half an hour.

After that they wandered without aim or goal, hither and thither over yard and house, usually together, sometimes talking in low voices, looking suspiciously at each unwanted car that might turn up the driveway.

Tear-stained and flustered Nola stumbled through her work. Mrs. Valentine arranged other matters, sometimes calling Paul and Dale, as the two oldest, to her side, asking them indefinitely for advice. But they would simply stand aside and listen and nod their approval. So the afternoon had gone on, and when the wind had come with the first moaning of the spruces, Mrs. Valentine had pushed the curtains aside to look at the tossing of their tops. Then she returned to the kitchen and said to Nola, "Well, the wind has come. Like I said this morning."

Nola looked at her strangely and would not answer, for she thought death was something under which one should go haggard and stunned.

Late in the afternoon she had been alone for a while, while Nola had locked herself in her room with a headache. Then she had listened to the silent house and had looked at the cat asleep on the old armchair, and tears had come slowly. After a while she had gone to the sun porch to read the note once more. Then she had gone outside to feel the wind along her temples and to look for the boys.

In the evening the wind still blew from the east. The four boys had gone to milk the cows, and she had stood in the flower garden a while, but when as from habit she had gone to pick up the hoe, she had suddenly remembered the tools beneath the mulberry and she had not been able to go and pick them up. It was time to bring the ducks back into their night quarters anyway. Almost eagerly she started for the orchard, where they greeted her coming and waited. They stood expectant, their heads lifted, their voices easy and turbulent, their eyes aglitter with the sun's low orange which shone from behind her. She stooped over the low orchard fence and talked to them and they answered.

Then she opened the gate and they streamed out, shouting taller greetings. She found herself filled with laughter, and watched them stream down the path without hesitation. Again she heard the frantic voices of Joseph and Benjamin, already in the rear, crowded aside by the others, their eyes pleadingly upon her. She laughed and they came close to her feet and she stooped over them and was happy.

"You poor old pluggers," she said, feeling their cool feet, and when she straightened from picking them up,

she saw her four sons come down the path, having finished the milking. They stood and watched the disappearing column of ducks and when they saw her smile over the two too fat ones in her arms, they smiled and waited for her.

She came closer and said, "Poor old Joseph and Benjamin. We should get them roller skates or something. Poor youngsters." The ducks grunted little noises and the boys came around her and made gentle noises to the ducks, scratching them softly between the eyes and stroking their beaks. They stood all close together, filled with small sounds and caresses, while she held the ducks, happily. All their caressing of the ducks seemed somehow for her. It was their indirect way of telling her soft and bountiful things, which they did not express. They stood long like that, saying more tender and more insane things to the two ducks. But the ducks became restless for all their fellows had disappeared into the duckhouse, and being ducks they wanted to be with them. Mrs. Valentine said to Paul and Dale, "Here, each of you take one and put them with the rest."

They took the ducks from her and went off, still telling each duck gentle things. Mrs. Valentine leaned against the fence and Derk and Vin also leaned against the wire fence, one on either side of her, and for a while they swayed like that in silence. "I said to Nola this morning," she said, "that we'd have wind before evening. I like wind, don't you?"

"It depends," said Vin. "I don't like it when haying, for instance."

"I like wind," said Derk, and then they were silent again.

The two older boys returned and they also leaned on the fence next to them, and swayed with the soft creaking of the wire. They listened to the different voices of the wind in the different trees and watched the reddish glitter of the tossing cherry leaves in the orchard. They did not speak. Then suddenly, a burly gust of wind tumbled upon the three calves in the little pasture. With clumsy, wild gaiety they lifted their tails and flew with the wind in great shapeless circles, the last red of the sun over them, around and around. Then Mrs. Valentine laughed first, and they all laughed at the wildness of the calves, heartily, their bodies relieved with laughter, the fence creaking beneath them. From her window Nola shook her head in misgiving. But they laughed on, not looking at each other, until the calves came to a stop. After that they listened to the wind again.

Confessions of a College Teacher

Anonymous



The author of this article is a well-known teacher and writer who for obvious reasons prefers to remain anonymous. He, in an unusual personal record, raises one of the most important questions in American education. How many other teachers have been faced with a similar choice?



TEN years ago I entered my first college classroom as a professor. I look back now and remember that my soul was on fire to teach. How glorious, I thought, to meet forty college students and spend a morning with them discussing books, and men, and the written dreams of men. I recall that my first lecture was about learning and the love of learning. Indeed, for six weeks I talked about a scholarly love of literature. I was so keen in my own adoration of Chaucer and Malory and Marlowe that I never doubted a similar passion in my students.

Then came the mid-term tests!

In the first paper I graded, a girl told me that when Juliet learned of Romeo's fate, she swooned and fell prostitute.

In the next paper a boy spoke of Hamlet as "the son of King Lear." A few papers on I read: "Wyatt and Surrey did not write poetry they wrote sonets." There was not a page in that entire paper without a sprinkling of mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. And the paper was written by a sophomore in one of our nationally-known colleges.

One of the questions had been: "Write all the dates you know." I explained to the class that I would accept *any* date, irrespective of its association with my particular course. Out of my class of forty students there was one student who knew as many as thirteen dates! One college sophomore out of forty knew as many as thirteen dates from all history, all literature, all biography. And there was one boy who knew only two. Here they are: 1812, Civil War; 1866, Revolutionary War.

As I read the papers I could have cried. How could a superstructure of lyrics and ballads and noble prose be erected where there was no foundation on which to build? A lack of knowledge about dates per se did not distress me; but for a boy to think that the War Between the States was fought fifty years before his date for the Revolutionary War, indicated a background of stupendous ignorance. Furthermore it showed that

mine was the impossible task of teaching Milton to students who didn't know Mother Goose.

"A few of these boys and girls are doing splendid work," I told myself after the doleful evening of grading the papers, "but most of them need to be halted in their slipshod advance through our loose American educational system. To halt them is my job; I must not let them go sliding from year to year in the belief that somehow they are being 'educated.' I'll stop them until they have accumulated enough exact knowledge to build upon, until they have acquired a scholarly love of learning." Oh, I vaunted myself that night; I even declared that I would equip them to take their places among learned men, among men who use their knowledge in careful thinking.

The next day my class ended in considerable confusion. "Aw, don't do us that way," one little blonde said, draping herself over the end of my desk and purring like a kitten. "Give us another chance. We'll study hard from now on. You will be good to us, won't you—huh?" And she smiled her smile.

I had said that their test papers showed little scholarship, but an abundance of atrocious writing, loose thinking, and confused information. "In future," I said, "you will give me an essay each week. In each essay you will write on the life and works of some one man in literature. You may use any reference books you like, but the value of the paper will depend on your personal estimate of the man whose writings you study."

The instant class was dismissed, students swarmed about my desk. Give them another chance. I refused. Well, they didn't understand. I explained again. One boy asked what man he should write about. "Make your own choice," I said. He asked where he should get reference books. "Anywhere you like." He wanted to know how he should go about writing the paper. I left it entirely to him.

Finally he insisted that his opinion of Sir Philip Sidney's poetry wasn't worth anything. I agreed with

that; but I told him that he would have actually to read the poems, form his own opinion about them, and put that opinion into words that expressed his meaning. I could see that the prospect caused him absolute torment. "What about letting me memorize something?" he asked. "Or you assign me some books to read." Anything—anything—rather than use his own mind. I found that attitude to be common.

I realized the magnitude of the job I had set myself, for already I had discovered that my pupils not only lacked knowledge, but that they had almost no idea of how to acquire it; what was infinitely worse, the majority of them didn't care. Indeed, a few frankly admitted that they weren't interested in poetry or mathematics or chemistry or anything else. They were in college because their friends were there, because it was the thing to do.

At the end of the first week under the new plan of study most of my students handed in their first weekly essays. That night I read them. Only a strength of will saved me from a frenzy. In class one day I had lectured on Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," telling of its infinite beauty, of its fantastic grandeur. In his essay one boy solemnly referred to it as "Cube the Can."

In a lecture on the lesser Elizabethans, I had talked for some time about John Taylor, the self-styled "water-poet." I had explained that he was not a true poet, that he was only a poetaster. A young lady informed me that John Taylor was not a true poet; "he was only a postmaster."

Perhaps my greatest sorrow was caused by two papers, one by a boy, the other by a girl, on Robert Herrick, the grand old Caroline poet. Both students correctly gave the date of Herrick's birth, 1593, and the date of his death, 1674; both spoke of Herrick's having lived at the time of Queen Elizabeth, King James, and King Charles. Then both students reviewed and discussed in detail the novels of the Robert Herrick who is living today, whose books are about Chicago and contemporary American life.

The next morning I told the boy of the bull he had made. He explained that he had "just overlooked" the fact that a poet who died in 1674 could hardly write novels in 1924. The girl said: "You know I noticed that, and I didn't understand it, either."

On the morning that I returned the papers I spent the entire hour talking about the blessings of scholarship. Decrying ignorance, urging an intellectual restlessness, I poured out my soul in a terribly sincere plea for learning. I begged each student to build an inner citadel of wisdom whence at times he might retire from the clank of the world and dream in harmony with his own spirit enriched by a knowledge of all that is noble. I let myself go as I had never done before. I so bared myself that I was trembling when I finished. Then a

boy raised his hand: "Are we going to be responsible for all that on final examination?" he asked.

As I tightened on my students, the drifters became more and more annoyed. They made excuses. I wouldn't accept them. They bluffed. I called their bluffs. They copied papers out of textbooks. I told them the names of the textbooks and returned the papers. Soon word went over the campus that I was hard. "Lay off him," the campus grapevine said. Soon all kinds of criticism began to drift back to me. I was sarcastic. I was rude. I wouldn't listen to reason. I asked for more work than could be done. I gave low grades and would not raise them—not even if men had been away on football trips, girls had been off on sorority business.

At the end of the first semester, twelve of my forty students transferred to other teachers. At the time I was very much pleased, believing that I was rid of twelve hopeless drags. One girl in particular I remember. She was a little academic prig who had her heart set on a grade of "A" in every course. I gave her only "B" and she promptly tossed a nervous breakdown. First she tried to cry me out of the higher grade. I wouldn't give it to her, not even after I learned that "it will break my mother's heart." Then she went to the dean of the college and sobbed out her nerves to him. She was just too nervous to carry a full schedule. She would simply have to drop a course, and since English was her hardest course she would have to drop it. She dropped it, all right. But one week later she showed up in another teacher's class who was notorious for giving high grades.

At the end of my first year of teaching, only eighteen students registered for my next year's course. The registrar grinned a sickly grin as he told me that students were asking not to be put in my class. "They claim that you work them too hard," he said.

Of my eighteen students a few had come to me because of my method of teaching; they wanted the intellectual freedom that the course afforded. A few of the others had come because they could not arrange their schedules to get in any other teacher's class. But the majority had come because the registrar had put them; to have escaped my class would have required a little effort on their part—they preferred merely to drift in and take their chances.

Early in this second year I unintentionally wadded the guns of my opponents. In discussions of poetry I had admitted that I was not enthusiastic about "Just Folks," by Edgar Guest. At another time I had confessed that "Excelsior" was not one of my favorite poems. Nor was "Hiawatha." Nor "Little Boy Blue." And then came the fateful day when I tried—sincerely and tenderly—to show that Poe's "Raven" is not in the absolute front rank of world poetry. A boy raised his

hand: "Is there any American poetry at all that you like?" he asked.

That was the shot heard round the campus. It reverberated in the fraternity houses. It echoed in the president's ears. Fathers and mothers of students heard its rumblings. It rolled back upon me in the accusation that I was un-American. What matter that I had bowed before old Walt Whitman and crossed myself before Emily Dickinson? No matter at all. I was decrying "Hiawatha," "Excelsior," "Little Boy Blue," and "The Raven"; therefore I was un-American. This attribute was added to my being sarcastic, rude, unreasonable, merciless.

For three years I held out. I would not, I vowed, cheapen scholarship. I would not dance to the slow, jazzy whistle of the drifters. During this time the officials of the college occasionally dropped hints. "It's not good for professors to be criticised by students. We want our professors to be popular," the president said. He smiled; but I understood what he meant.

Then one morning the dean asked me to drop in his office. "See here," he said, "I'm getting complaints from parents. They say you're working their children too hard." He listened courteously while I proved that six hours' study a week would satisfy me. "Yes," he went on when I finished, "but some students find it difficult to do that much work. Take Joe Thornton, for instance; Joe's a deserving boy."

"He may be deserving," I said, "but he positively refuses to learn anything; he is hopelessly lazy."

"But can't you be a little more gentle with him?" the dean said. "Try to coddle him a bit."

Coddle him! Coddle that great oaf who the day before had told me that John Keats was a pretty good poet, he guessed—"though I haven't read anything of his 'cept 'Crossing the Bar'." Coddle him! I wanted to give him a pick and shovel and send him into a big muddy ditch where he belonged. I informed the dean that I was no intellectual wet-nurse, not even for the son of one of the town's most wealthy men. "You should learn to adapt yourself to conditions," the dean said coolly, as I bowed myself from his office.

The next afternoon one of the older professors met me as I was leaving the campus. "Come for a walk," he said. We chatted about conditions in China, about Conrad's death and the death of Thomas Hardy; we were discussing Soviet Russia when suddenly he turned to me: "I heard about your talk with the dean yesterday," he said. "I believe you're making a mistake. Why not coddle Joe Thornton?"

I felt as if foundations were being jerked from under me. This professor I knew to be a fine scholar and a grand old battler for the classics; yet he was asking me to coddle a lazy drifter. I muttered something about scholastic standards and my personal integrity.

"I've been teaching for twenty years," he said, "and

I've learned not to take it seriously. We have many boys and girls on this campus who are fine, who are doing splendid work. We can help them—that's our great privilege. As for Joe Thornton, and the hundreds of others like him, there's nothing we can do."

"We can make life very uncomfortable for them," I declared, "then fail them at the end of the year."

"We couldn't do that and stay alive," he said. "There's not a college in America that could keep its doors open if it consistently failed its loafers. We must have the enrollment and the tuition fees in order to pay the bills; that's why we allow these drifters to remain in college; that's why we pass them on from year to year; that's why thousands of them annually are being graduated from colleges and universities." He looked at me and laughed. "Don't be so glum about it. A college professor, more than any other man, needs an unfailing sense of humor."

But I'm afraid that I was unable to laugh about it; so we walked for a time in silence. Finally he said: "When I was your age I felt exactly as you. I determined to adhere rigidly to the strictest standards. Carrying through with my plan, I showed the loafers no mercy; I failed half the students I taught. The authorities gave me veiled warnings; but I held to my standards and continued to fail the loafers. Then one day I received notice that I wouldn't be needed the next year. Unofficially I learned that I was being let out because I had stubbornly demanded work from students who wouldn't, or who couldn't, give it." The old professor glanced at me, then glanced away quickly. "A word to the wise," he said.

"I understand," I told him.

And I did understand. The word was being passed to me that I was on the academic spot. Fit myself into the system or get out, that was what they were telling me. For a time I debated what to do. I loathed the thought of coddling Joe Thornton and his ilk. Why shouldn't I tell the authorities what I thought, jam my hat on the side of my head, and walk out? But I didn't want to do that. I love teaching. I love talking about books, and men, and the written dreams of men. Furthermore a good number of my pupils have meant a great deal to me. One of them has published a book of poetry. Another has written a novel. I didn't want to give up my association with that type of student.

Usually college professors form their teaching policy slowly, drifting into it without realizing that they have fully surrendered to the whine of students, the complaints of parents, and the subtle pressure from the college authorities. My experience was somewhat different; for after the old professor talked to me, I realized that I had come to the crossroads: either I would need to coddle Joe Thornton and his fellows or I would need to resign from college teaching.

Sorely troubled by the necessity of making the decision, I debated my course with no success—until suddenly I remembered what my professor friend had said about a sense of humor. All in an instant I understood what he meant. And I laughed aloud as I saw the Olympian humor in my reading the fragile lullabies of William Blake to great louts like Joe Thornton, in my reading the sonnets of Christina Rossetti to tackles, guards, and fullbacks. That night I made my decision: rather than give up teaching, I would bow before the power of The System; I recognized that my function as a college professor was to act merely as an educational chaperone.

One night a little later I dined with Henry M. Walker, his wife, and his daughter Betty. Betty was one of my pupils; and I had found serious difficulty in passing her. She had a good little mind; but I simply could not interest her in books, study, or learning of any kind.

At dinner Mrs. Walker and I discussed the rainy weather; we hoped that the weather would clear up. Mr. Walker made predictions about business conditions. He explained in detail how the bandsaw in his lumber mill rips off slabs from logs and how the slab-chain carries the slabs to the burner. He started to tell a story about how he got his start in business, how he made his first ten dollars; but Mrs. Walker interrupted: "Oh, Daddy, don't tell that old story again." She seemed a little embarrassed as she hurried on to describe the dress that Mrs. Carter was having made for Susan to wear on the night of her débüt.

After dinner we went into the library and Mr. Walker turned on the radio. He glanced at his watch. "Ten minutes yet," he said. Mrs. Walker explained that he meant ten minutes before Amos and Andy came on. "He never misses them," she declared, and took up her knitting. For ten minutes Mr. Walker turned the dials and told me the difficulty that Andy had been having with Madam Queen. Mrs. Walker corrected him on little details; they argued a little.

During the radio program I glanced about the room. In the book-cases were sets of books; the sets on the top shelves were dummies. On the walls were brightly-colored prints in heavy gilt frames. Mrs. Walker smiled as she knitted and listened to Andy. Mr. Walker laughed out loud and occasionally slapped his leg to emphasize his enjoyment. Betty smoked a cigarette and stared dully at the floor.

And suddenly I understood. Betty's high school was not to blame. Her college was not to blame. Nor was she. How could she love Shakespeare, Rembrandt, and Beethoven, when she had been reared with sets of dummy books, cheap prints, and radio comedians? Only a girl of rare spiritual enthusiasm could overcome such handicaps.

In America there are hundreds of thousands of boys

and girls from homes of finest cultural tradition, homes where there are good books, good paintings, good music, and good talk; but most unfortunately the boys and girls from these homes too frequently are lost on the American campus, swallowed up by the mob.

We professors are embarrassed and humiliated, we are quick to become annoyed by those critics who declare that the schools and colleges are entirely to blame for the present weakness of American education. We rightly insist that the fault is not entirely ours; we are willing to share it, but not to shoulder it all.

Our critics ask too much. They ask that professors make scholars of all boys and girls who come to us, even of boys and girls reared in homes of dummy books, cheap prints, and certain types of radio entertainment. Professors can't do that. They can work with only the material sent them by the American home. Indeed, after they have finished their work, and regardless of how well they have done it, they give back to the home only a slightly veneered version of what the home originally sent them.

It was five years ago when I made my decision to conform. That same year I passed all my students except two. The next year I passed all except one. I abolished the weekly essay. I assigned simple poems to be read, and I accepted the most villainous excuses as to why they weren't read. I gave only a few tests, asked the most elementary questions, and awarded high grades to every one.

Soon word went out over the campus that something had happened to me. As a matter of fact, I was really a swell fellow, a regular guy. I must have been in bad health when I was acting so hard. Students began to ask for my classes. They no longer thought me sarcastic, rude, unreasonable; none of them doubted my artistic patriotism. Indeed, I became so popular that today I am called one of the finest profs on the faculty. Janitors have to put extra chairs in the aisles of my lecture room. On the campus I'm a great success.

But in the privacy of my own room? Well, that's wretchedly different. What of my love for scholarship? What of my passion for learning? What of the inner citadel where the spirit is enriched by all that is noble? Does Othello still humble me as once he did? Do I still sit on a tavern stool alongside old Sam Johnson and chuckle as I hear him roar down the opposition? Can I still see Keats's unravished bride of quietness? Can I hear Shelley's lark? I don't know. I can't answer those questions. I know only that I have a job. That the college officials worry me no more about my teaching. That on the campus I'm a damn fine fellow. . . . And what price all that? I can't say, though my mirror tells me that there are lines in my face; and yesterday a friend said that he thought I looked a little tired.

An Old Reporter Looks at the Mad-House World

By Charles Edward Russell

Is the world getting better? Mr. Russell from fifty years in the midst of the world's battles for reform answers.

FROM time to time among us arise sad-voiced prophets, or leaders with maybe a biliary derangement, who assure us that all is lost, that mankind is hopelessly wicked, the world grows always worse instead of better, all attempts to reform or improve it are ridiculously futile, and here we all go plunging down the roof together. Occasionally across the blackness of the night of gloom some soul with sorrow laden can descry a gleam from the red, red hope that lies in revolution, riot, and raven, preluding salvation to be won by wading to the neck in blood. But even this precious deliverance seems at times overshadowed with a doubt. After all, is it really worth while to try to save a race so depraved or so stupid—or both?

As to underlying causes of our dolorous state it is to be noted that the doctors differ. From one source we learned not long ago that it was all the ductless glands. Either we have them when we should not or do not have them when we should, and either way there is no health in us. Before this doctrine had time to soak in and take hold, it was impeached by another that said something might be done with us if we were caught young and subjected to some peculiar style of educational enlightenment, but even in this there seemed to be no real abiding faith. For the next day or so we were back again in the dumps with the assurance that we are only monkeys anyway; so we have always been, so we shall always be, and what chance of redemption can inhere in a monkey?

Far be it from me to controvert eminent authority; and, besides, who am I that I should seek to deprive any one of the sweet consolation naturally pertaining to the belief that everything is going to hell except that which has already arrived there? Nevertheless, I may



be allowed to set down a few humble notations of a mere reporter whose ignorance of ductless glands, admitted to be abysmal, must place him really outside the boundaries of a serious consideration.

First, then, no one really tempted to take on the wrinkled brow of despair about the world and its state can have been an itinerant newspaper man fifty years ago in America, for in that case instead of lamenting he would now be giving thanks for proof of the unconquerable spirit of goodness in men that, despite all untoward material conditions, continues to struggle up to

the light. For the true wonder is not that we are so bad but that we are not immeasurably worse. If mankind, weighed upon by the present social system, debased by the greed it plants and sedulously fosters, hardened by its insane cruelties, atrophied by its selfishness and brutality, degraded by the wars it causes, can still cling to ideals of honesty, kindness, peace, purity, brotherliness, truly we should exult and not mourn, for the power so revealed is indomitable and unturnable, and enough to remake the world.

Next, as a matter of sheerest fact, it is impossible for the old reporter, looking about him now and recalling conditions fifty years ago, to escape the conclusion, reached on purely professional grounds and without doctrinaire accessories, that the world does not grow worse, does not stand still, but slowly grows better. It is not for me to attempt here detailed and picturesque comparisons. Let me rather venture a few illuminative facts that may suggest to those unaware of time's mutations a way to reconstruct the former American scene and so give over pessimism.

We will begin with one excellent indicator of civilization, which is the state of the under-privileged, and

the attitude thereto of the rest of mankind. We will cite first the great tenement-house region, the teeming and famous East Side of New York.

And here we are to be understood definitely, if you please, as dealing not with economic conditions of the period in which this is written. Such conditions are bad and always will be bad so long as we cling thus fatuously to the social system that makes them bad. They are bad in this time of general depression; they are bad in the times when Wall Street hornpipes around a bull market. What we are to consider here are the things that reveal the thought, essential spirit, trend, and sympathies of men.

But even if we were to go clean out of the beaten track of these inquiries and consider what is called the economic and political wreckage of the world, supposing that we can induce ourselves to dig below the surface, the common dominance of Gloomy Gus will seem much more wonderful than infectious. "Consider, sir," said Doctor Johnson, "how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence." The real situation does not require even so much of a placebo. An old, outworn, poisonous social system is going to pieces. As it disintegrates, crimes multiply, kidnappings, banditries, rackets. The defensive machinery of society visibly collapses. All these are but the symptoms of the passing of one era, the coming of another. The process is exactly like a stricken whale in its flurries. For a time there will be a prodigious lashing of the tail, foam, confusion, and some danger. Boats that get too near will be swamped. But the whale is dying, thank God for His infinite mercies, and when it is quite dead mankind will gain profit therefrom. For, to shift the metaphor, from the wreckage of this pernicious system will assuredly come one much better.

"But," wails Old Man Moroso, "there are all these dictatorships! The world is reverting to autocracy!" He will see nothing but the first aspect of anything, Moroso. The world is not reverting to autocracy. We have dictatorships not because we are going backward but because we are going forward. We have them not because democracy grows weaker but because it grows stronger. The simple fact is that democracy and the existing social system have become incompatible. They cannot live together in the same worldly house. The dictatorship is a frank recognition of that fact and is therefore a gain. Anything that manifests truth is a gain. Dictatorships force upon the world the straight and speedy choice between the present social system and democracy. Of necessity, the present social system must have quick, direct, effective, ruthless action in government. It cannot brook democracy's deliberate ways. True. But if anybody thinks that in such a choice the democracy that has been developed through centuries of struggle and sacrifice is to surrender to the exigencies of a few arrogant and selfish profiteers, such

a one must have read history to no purpose—or not at all. Dictators! They are as ephemeral as summer flies.

But come back to our illustration of the developing spirit of man, which is our true theme, for only the spirit counts.

Fifty years ago there were no tenement-house laws, and anybody could build any kind of a murderous flat that he might deem likely to return good profits. Fifty years ago nobody on the outside seemed to give a rap about the people that dwelt in those horrible barracks, but the fortunate generally believed that if there were any poor they were poor through their own fault and great laziness. Either that, or God had ordained that some of His children should be forfeited with too much and many starved with too little, and shall we rebel against a divine decree? Fifty years ago the East Side was uncleansed, wretchedly paved, disfigured with telegraph poles and perilous festoons of wires, was wretchedly policed, got sick or got well as heaven might order, wallowed in political corruption, was the acknowledged kingdom of political thugs and ruffianly bosses, was the gold mine of grafting police officers, had no breathing spaces worth the name and no schools that were not neglected and unsanitary, was infested with dives, boozing kens, and the resorts of criminals, never had an election that was not putrid through and through with frauds everybody knew and nobody cared about. Billy McGlory's dive running full blast as a horrible factory of crime, vice, misery, and suicide was only a type. On some streets every other store front was a saloon, a crooked café, an assignation house, or a house of ill-fame.

You think there is graft in New York today? Right. There is; much graft. But it is little compared with the organized, brazen, impudent, arrogant overlordship of the plunder-and-vice alliance that prevailed in New York fifty years ago.

Oh, yes, I know! Gangs and gang murders and all that. Are not conditions bad in 1933? They certainly are. But gangs—they are no new things in New York. And my fellow New Yorkers that dwell much upon the doings of the latter-day thug can never have been in actual contact with the Whyos, the Humpty Jacksons, the Paul Kellys, the terrifying denizens of Hell's Kitchen and Corcoran's Roost, nor have known of that strange band of miscreants that for years kept the region along the North River between Forty-third and Fifty-fourth Streets in one continuous chill of alarm.

And, yes, I know the East Side of New York in 1933 is nothing to boast about. I know that 70,000 tenement houses that ought to be pulled down still breed disease and ruin lives. But all this being admitted, it is better than it was fifty years ago, and the great point is that we have now the beginning of a public conscience

about these things and the first flush of a determination to end them.

But I speak only of a few scattered examples. All municipal government and conditions are much better in 1933 than they were in 1883. Take Chicago, the maligned and misunderstood, held in 1933 to the world as an awful example of a crime-ridden community. Who that carries in his mind a vivid picture of Chicago of fifty years ago can fail to be exhilarated at the contrast? Yes, straight in the face of the Capones, and all the rest. It is enough to stress this difference, that in 1933 the community cares; it is determined to abolish the evil conditions and is doing so. In 1883 nobody cared; the riot of lawlessness, rampant vice, thuggery, and graft was accepted as inevitable and incurable. Stand now on the lake front at the foot of Van Buren Street, take in that striking panorama of stately designing, and recall, if you can, the prospect from the same spot in 1883. Is it not marvellous? Yes; but that transformation is not greater than all the rest that has taken place. "Old Chicago, you make me shiver," ran the words of a true song of those days. It does not make you shiver now. Old Chicago! How can I make you understand what it was like, the rowdy, dirty, slovenly, slouching, aggressively ugly brute of a place. I give up the attempt. Only one thing I will recite and leave you to imagine the rest. A certain character, whose name must be familiar in the recollections of every old-timer, published at intervals a newspaper called *The Street Gazette*, devoted to the disorderly-house business with correspondence from all important Western cities giving reports about the state of the local trade, with pleasant personal items concerning those engaged in it. And nobody cared.

Or if you wish to pursue the subject farther, look over the files of the old *Chicago Times* from 1876 to 1883.

Every average American city was ruled by a greasy boss, who maintained his rule by an alliance with respectable business men on one side and the lowest dregs of the underworld on the other. Elections in these places were farcical. There were virtually no election laws that were enforced. In most places there was little or no registration of voters and anything was a ballot that could be stuffed into a ballot box.

I am citing only sample illustrations, kindly remember. Take the status of the worker. There was a ten-hour work day, apparently fixed forever and regarded as divinely ordered. There was no factory inspection; workers toiled amid any conditions that might be provided for them, sanitary or unsanitary, dangerous or safe. The sweat-shop was unchecked in its fearful misadministrations. There was virtually no compensation for a worker injured at his work. Workers were not supposed to have socially defined rights. Women and children in industry were without a shadow of protection. There

were no laws regulating hours of labor, no minimum-wage restrictions, and no protest against a general industrial injustice but such as the struggling and despised Knights of Labor could furnish. Except in a few larger cities and in a few highly organized trades, labor organizations were mostly impotent. Among the wealthy and the more fortunate, the opinion entertained of labor was one of open contempt. John Hay expressed it in a book that savagely satirized and ridiculed the wage worker. Nobody cared.

The country had not yet recovered from the mad orgy of graft, swindling, pillage, money grubbing, and money wallowing that followed the Civil War, and nobody seemed to care much about that, either.

There was a distinctly lower tone throughout the public service, less of the sense of responsibility, less of conscience, more of blind fealty to parties, catch-words, and the private purse.

There was no regulation of railroad companies; they were a law unto themselves, and maintained unchecked a form of satrapy incredible in a free society; loaded themselves with watered stock and fictitious bonds for the public to pay, and in every community of their realm debased the coin of public virtue. There was no regulation of public-utility companies; they bribed, corrupted, rotted, and overcapitalized at their pleasure. There was no Trade Commission to lay bare the piratical excursions of great corporations; they exercised upon press and public a power unlimited. There were no effective pure-food laws; exploiters were free to palm upon the public any impure or deleterious concoction from which they could make money.

The accepted notions of political and social economy, if any, belonged to the Stone Age. The purpose of the employer to grind down to the last cent the wages of his employees was generally applauded as "good business" and salutary. It had occurred to but few that under the existing system of society, the wage fund was the nation's purchasing power and that when the wage fund was reduced prosperity was impaired for employer as for employee.

International affairs were conducted upon a basis as primitive as that of Pharaoh. Only a few cranks, Quakers, and silly dreamers had any notion that we could ever get along without war. Every nation looked upon every other nation as a skin-clad troglodyte looked upon a stranger when the supply of cold ichthyosaurus was running low. Russia was crowding down upon India, Britain was butting her way into China, Alexandria had just been bombarded to collect a British debt, and nobody cared.

Well, is it any better today? says Resolute Melancholy, pointing to the news from Manchuria. Yes. It is far better. Let us take one comparison, and see.

In 1856 the English were eagerly pushing their ad-

vance upon China. Chinese waters were much infested with pirates. The Chinese Government was reproached for not more vigorously suppressing piracy. A Chinese gunboat pursued and cornered a pirate craft, which hoisted a British flag. The Chinese commander disregarded this trick and captured the pirate. The British Government pretended that this was a deadly insult, demanded apologies, indemnities, and promises. When the Chinese Government failed to comply with the last detail of the demands, the British at once bombarded Canton and forced what is called in history the Second Opium War, leading to the capture of Peking and the looting and burning of the imperial Summer Palace, probably the most wonderful thing of its kind in the world.

That was the old way. Now come with me to the Assembly of the League of Nations. It is September, 1926, seventy years later. Sit here in the gallery and look down upon the main floor. There sit together the representatives of fifty-six nations, brown men, black men, white men, yellow men, all kinds, colors, creeds, races, religions, Mohammedan, Christian, Buddhist, Shinto, everything else. Side by side sit such men as fifty years ago would have viewed one another with implacable hatred. Of a sudden, the head of the Chinese delegation takes the rostrum and reveals to the world a fact carefully concealed for many weeks that two British gunboats had attacked and bombarded a town on the Yangtse River. He enters a formal complaint. The head of the British delegation, Lord Robert Cecil, has an opportunity to reply. He makes a lame and impotent defense of the action of the British officers. The world through its representatives there learns all the details of the affair and perceives that the British have been guilty of an unwarranted aggression. Note well that there is now no chance to deceive public opinion in Britain or elsewhere about this. The mere force of publicity is enough. The British withdraw their gunboats and will not repeat the bombarding experiment, and above all there is no war. Is not this a change?

Yes, I know again. The League of Nations was not able to prevent Japan's housebreaking expedition into Manchuria and Jehol. True; but it could and did express and drive home the world's condemnation, and more than that, it could and did propose another way to deal with the emergency than sixteen-inch guns and the bombarding of cities. Even if it failed, was it not something to have such a means internationally offered and urged? Something? It was much; it was an enormous gain! Progress is slow. The peaceful means rejected today will be the world's favorite prescription tomorrow. At last there has been a start. Let us give thanks and be glad.

Mental myopia it is to bound the great world with our own day or think any evil more than transitory.

In 1842 Britain made war on China to compel China to admit opium. Nobody cared. She cannot make war on China today for any such purpose. In 1798 she went about Ireland hanging men that advocated the independence of their country. In 1933 men said with impunity such things as Robert Emmet was hanged for advocating; the oath of allegiance was abolished, the last tie broken. In 1854 the American ministers to England, France, and Spain met at Ostend and signed a manifesto urging the American Government, if Spain refused to sell Cuba for slavery purposes, to make war upon Spain and take Cuba by force—for the sake of slavery. How does that document look when held before the modern conscience?

No, never tell me the world grows worse or even stands still. It grows always better. Not swiftly, not with an even motion of progress, not as impatient men desire it to improve. Still it grows better. It is immensely better than it was fifty years ago; immensely better. There is more kindness, more interest in the other man's welfare, more impulse toward justice, more perception of the fundamental truths of human existence and fellowship. Yes, despite all the unspeakable horrors and unimaginable savageries of the World War. Out of that maniac's dream has come the beginning of a conception of a substitute for battlefields, and, remembering how slow is all progress, again we can give thanks for a substantial gain.

Slowly we go up, weighed upon still by the heavy burden of a murderous system, hobbled by our clinging fondness for old delusions, shackled with our prejudices, groping and stumbling. Still we go up. The notion that men are hopelessly bad and incapable of advancing is merely childish petulance. The notion that we are to sit with folded hands until we shall be washed in the blood of some unnamed revolution is an excuse for personal inertia. The notion that we are to move forward by diving backward, by a recourse to mediæval autocracy, forced labor, Siberia, and the firing squad, is preposterous. Slowly but surely we go up. When we are rid of the social system that has so long cursed all mankind we shall move more rapidly. But of that system the world can be rid without shedding a drop of blood or sending one more soul to Siberia, real or figurative. It can be and will be.

Of course, even now the upward progress might be greatly accelerated. Every attack upon every entrenched evil helps the onward motion. And it makes not the slightest difference if in men's eyes the attack is fruitless. There is no such thing in this world as a wasted protest against any existing evil; absolutely no such thing. If the protest is made to no more than a handful of persons and is stifled then, it will, if it is true, just, and honest, bear some time its due measure of fruit. The common error, the cherished delusion, of

reformers is to think that if their particular league, society, or organization goes ashore, all is lost. Reform is not so simple as that, but a vast, complicated, and often mysterious evolution. It is not to be had with the naïveté of a single push. As a matter of fact, nothing in any way good is ever lost. What? All these worthy motions for betterment that you have known and maybe lamented as ineffectual—were they failures? Not one of them. Forgotten, unrecorded, perhaps, each left its own planting of idea or suggestion to come back or spring up and become potent.

Look it up in your histories. The Chartist movement in England—what could have seemed a greater failure? The societies broken up, the leaders condemned to death and narrowly escaping the gallows, the whole uprising suppressed and stamped out. Yet almost everything Chartist stood for has since been adopted into the British constitution and system. Or the successive steps by which the British House of Commons was redeemed from its ancient condition of a landowners' club and made a body representative of the nation's will—the men that advocated these changes were defeated but the changes they advocated went into effect. The successive steps by which the British franchise was broadened and reformed—all these were actually taken by the party that had opposed them, not by the party that urged them.

So it is here. Reaction may hold with joy its autopsies on reforms that seem to have perished, but such inquests are upon only outer shell and visible tegument. These indeed may be dead, but not the spirit within. That can no more be killed than the spirit of man to which it is akin. Always when the shell had been buried, the spirit went on working, in one way or another, until some part of the original purpose was attained. Some part; not all. Not all of any aim is ever attained. So far in human history, progress has never been made in Seven League Boots but step by step and little by little.

From the recorded phenomena of reforming efforts certain general principles may be adduced, which are not the less true because they are not generally recognized by reformers and will not be.

1. Betterment comes if men will to have it.
2. It never comes in the way we think it will come.
3. It never comes at the time when we expect it.
4. It never comes from the source that we expect it to come from.
5. Often when it seems most hopeless it is nearest.
6. Nobody can control these things; nobody can notably affect them. What seems to be required is that there shall be an effort for betterment, a steadfast protest against some evil, a mental loyalty to good. Some other power takes care of the rest of the job and often when they seem strongest the stone walls are shaking.

In the last fifty-two years, this country has seen reform movement after reform movement begin with an auspicious launching, voyage on with swelling sails and humming winds, and pile up on one reef or another, leaving only some wreckage and a fading memory. Of such movements that most have attracted attention, one and one only, the effort to obtain woman suffrage, has proved anything but a wreck and a disappointment. Yet betterment has moved steadily on, seen or unseen, and mostly without that leadership that we Anglo-Saxons make so much of. How shall we dispose of that unassailable fact?

Possibly it may be of interest to catalog here some of the causes that have wrecked these tall ships and brought to an apparent nought so many gallant crusaders. Well, then, have at it.

1. The reformers wearied of the voyage before it was half over. The first and indispensable requisites of these adventures are persistence and patience, and most of us have neither. It is hard to believe that the unknown member of a reforming organization, attendant upon each business meeting and seldom opening mouth, is serving the cause better than the man in the limelight that makes the speeches and the noise, but this is the literal fact, nevertheless. And as to patience, the real test of reforming purpose is to hold on steadfastly when apparently there is nothing doing and no interest in the proceedings. No virtue is rarer.

2. Squabbles and jealousies and suspicions. Most reformers had rather fight one another than front the enemy. Divisions among reformers are the strength of



the exploiters. If all the persons in the United States that are opposed to any one form of privilege would unite against it and stay united for six months they could put that privilege out of existence. In 1933 there were in the United States some fifty-two organizations devoted to the ending of war, all multiplicating one another's efforts, all getting in one another's way. If all were in one great organization the government would have to listen to its mighty voice. No government will bother much with the significance of fifty-two almost inaudible whispers scattered over long periods. Intolerance is the reformer's besetting sin. Each usually insists that the way he prefers is the only way of salvation and all other roads lead to perdition. In truth, no human being can tell which way betterment will come and one person that insists only upon betterment is better than ten pulling ten ways and getting nowhere.

3. Personal ambitions and personal loyalties, than which nothing is more comical, although the two have wrecked many a good movement. If the cause is not immeasurably greater than any man enlisted in it, then it is a cause not worth enlisting in.

4. Failure of reformers to stand by when attacked. The notion that a Vested Interest will lie down and without a struggle allow itself to be deprived of its advantages is a childish delusion. For nothing else in this world will men fight as they will fight for profits. Every assailant of privilege will be assailed in return, but as a rule when that happens all reformers of the high-brow, pink, and intellectual orders instantly begin to run out. It is not so among the proletarians and wage-workers, who have some understanding of the true nature of the conflict and some sense of the necessity of resistance. But it is true of others. Troglodyte newspapers can usually break up any reforming movement among the intelligentsia by applying a little judicious ridicule or bitter attack.

Attack, is it? Ridicule? Do but consider the vindications of Time. Wendell Phillips went about with a price on his head, hissed, hooted, hated, threatened with lynching. The thing for which he strove became the rock and the salvation of the Republic. James Baird Weaver was cartooned, ridiculed, denounced, scorned from one end of the country to the other. The world admits today the truth of all he said then about the perils of Concentrated Power and the private control of the money supply. Father McGlynn was silenced for insisting that poverty was unnecessary and a blight upon the nation. The world sees today that he was right. If

a Populist were to return to earth and say now what he was exorcised for saying in 1893 he would be condemned for talking old stuff from the back numbers. What do you fear, O Goodman Regularity? Speak it out, say your little piece, and dread not. The furious denunciations of today are the plaudits of tomorrow and the only thing to be afraid of is the mind closed against new ideas.

But however reformers may miss stays and muddle their steering, the cause for which they sail will win in the end if it is based upon any principle and not inspired by the mere steam of the flesh pots.

And now allow the old reporter one last suggestion.

Nothing else pays so well as enlistment in some betterment movement. It pays—not in simoleons nor in kudos, but in one's right to be on good terms with one's self, which is about all there is in life anyway that amounts to a hoot.

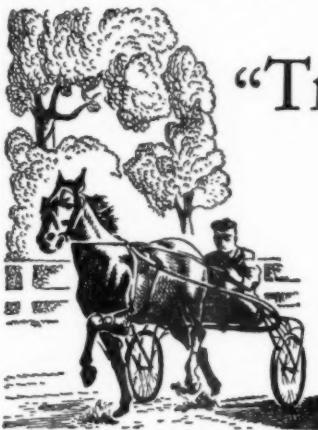
About this there is no sentiment, but only practical fact. I happen to have seen the whole show from overture to curtain drop, seen it in twenty-seven nations all the way from Scotch Cap Lighthouse to Stewart Island, and everywhere one fact has been pounded into my dull head. It is better to be a doorpost on this side of the house than have goose-liver pâté on the other. To make money is nothing; most of the money-makers I have known were among the dullest of all God's creatures and led lives flatter than a stove-lid. To get office or position or distinction is nothing; of the men that fifty years ago had all the limelight and the shouting hardly one still clings by so much as a shred to the human memory. To crowd and elbow to the summit of a profession is nothing; who remembers now the leading lawyers, physicians, engineers, of fifty years ago? Even to write literature is nothing; the literary idols of one generation are the jest of the next and the pavement dust of the next. Well, then, what is there of a rational object of life as one ricochets from bump to bump through this wild world beneath the sun? Why, looking at the matter judicially and coldly, as a reporter and so only, the one purpose that seems to have either sanity or actual reward is to keep some step, however stumbling, however far in the rear, with the vast, silent, often mysterious, sometimes hardly discernible processes that are slowly and surely transforming the world from a wolves' den to a place where man can know some peace, some content, some joy of living, some sense of the inexhaustible beauties of the universe in which he has been placed.

In a coming number:

"I Can Count on Myself," reflections of a woman of 50 plus

BY MARTHA BENSLEY BRUERE

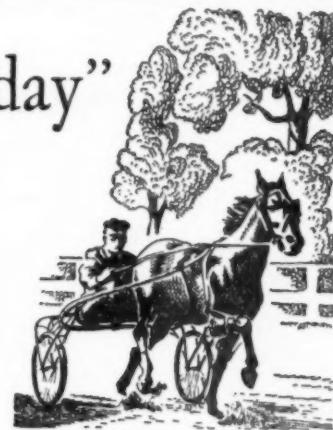
LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES



“Trotting Races Today”

By Evan Shipman

The American trotting horse still holds the loyalty of many racing enthusiasts, as the great crowd at the recent Hambletonian shows. Mr. Shipman, who knows horses and racing both here and abroad, tells the story of the historic sport and its present status.



GOVERNOR WILBUR CROSS of Connecticut spoke last summer at the Hartford races on the last day of what may have been the last meet at old Charter Oak Park. He told of how as a boy he had watched the champions, St. Julien, Jay-Eye-See, and the great Maud S., circle that track under the lovely ring of maple and oak trees. Today the lawns are rank and neglected; the wooden grandstand, the fifty-year-old original one, is bleak, unpainted, rotting with the weather, and where once thousands had packed the grounds now only a small crowd, mostly elderly people, had come out to watch the races.

Harness horses such as the great Dexter, famous seventy years ago, Dan Patch for whom sleds, express wagons, and cigars were named, or Maud S., the first horse to trot a mile faster than 2.10, have become part of an American mythology. Their pictures decorated the barns of our boyhood, and as weather vanes their gilded likenesses swung in the wind over white farmhouses. These Currier and Ives relics were not quaint portraits to their contemporaries; they were horses that might have been bred by any farmer. Many times in those days such a dream was realized. Goldsmith Maid, for instance, wandered an Orange County, New York, pasture unbroken until she was six years old. Developed, she became a great mare, raced thirteen years, won over \$364,000, more money than any horse of any kind had ever won until last year, when Mr. Kilmer's Sun Beau retired with earnings of \$375,000.

The driving horse, the roadster, was to our parents what the automobile is to us. The automobile has profoundly affected our mode of life, in a way revolutionized it, but we are apt to forget the scene into which it was so lately introduced. The garage has not been with us always; its equivalent was the livery and sales stable. Those straight lines of concrete highway were once shady, gravel-surfaced roads. Breeding the horses which travelled them was usually a small-scale local operation, and the trotting track was the proving ground for the blood lines used. The exploits of Sir Malcolm Campbell at Daytona Beach mean nowhere near as much to this generation as the record mile of Maud S. in 2.08 $\frac{3}{4}$ did to a not so distant one.

The horse (the far West is an exception to these generalizations) is still used as a draft animal, to mount cavalry, as a luxury sport for wealthy people (polo, fox hunting, show), as a medium for gambling, and as a spectacle of speed, endurance, and courage on the race track. There is, of course, considerable confusion of the former function with the latter qualities. There are two types, breeds, of race horse: the English thoroughbred and the American standard-bred trotter. People generally unfamiliar with horses are aware of thoroughbred running-races through the publicity given them by newspapers. These races are conducted for long meets at tracks outside large urban centres, while trotting and pacing, survivals of a simpler time, appeal to a more conservative public, the farmer, the

country gentleman, people who still remember the driving horse. Running races in this country have a Southern tradition; the Southerner rode horseback. Trotting races followed the New Englander on his migrations west. The New Englander always built good roads to drive on. There may also have been a Puritan casuistic distinction between “matching” a horse you sat *behind* and “racing” one you rode *on*.

Charts and reports of running-race meetings fill the sporting pages of the daily papers. And to the casual reader this is racing. In truth, it is only one-half of the sport; more trotters race in this country than thoroughbreds (there were nine hundred trotting meetings held this last year of the depression, eleven hundred the year before). This traditionally American sport goes on year after year, from the little county fair tracks with purses in the hundreds to the Grand Circuit, where one great race, the Hambletonian, may be worth \$70,000. The reasons for this neglect by the press and its consequence, the ignorance of the general public, are two: first, the decision of races by heats, two out of three, is not suitable for the now universal away-from-the-track gambling; second, the city crowds that throng the running tracks are not overly familiar with the horse. They go out for quick action. The more times a two-dollar bill can be reinvested during an afternoon the better. Horses to these people are strange names by which they remember various sums of money won or lost in the past. I have insisted upon the con-

trast between the organized commercial aspect of the runners and the more leisurely traditions of trotting because within the confines of one sport it illustrates a serious change in American customs and life. The trotting horse is an anachronism, but it survives as one hardy symbol of something valuable and characteristic to which we are tenacious in spite of so much change.

The fast trot as distinguished from the gallop is an acquired gait and has been wonderfully improved by scientific selection and breeding. The thoroughbred stallion, *Messenger*, imported from England to this country in 1780, is generally considered the foundation horse of the breed. Horses carrying his blood when crossed with mares of the English Norfolk or Hackney strain were found to combine the trotting "action" of their dams with the race-like nervous organization of the thoroughbred. It was only by chance that *Messenger* was used to cover "cold blooded" mares. Shortly after his importation laws were passed in Pennsylvania and New York, where he stood, forbidding horse racing. The farmers, having no use for thoroughbred colts, used the new sire to improve their general utility animals. By the middle of the last century the characteristics of a type began to be fixed; the more important families were concentrated; and from that time the standard trotter "bred on" requiring less and less infusion of outside blood. The first trotting association was founded at New York City in 1825. At the time the record for the mile was held by *Boston Blue* in three minutes (3.00). This mark has been successively reduced by famous horses until today it stands at the 1.56 $\frac{1}{4}$ of *Peter Manning*, owned by the Hanover Shoe Farms. Some of the horses who assisted in this radical reduction were: *Lady Suffolk*, 2.29 $\frac{1}{2}$, *Flora Temple*, 2.19 $\frac{3}{4}$, Mr. Robert Bonner's *Dexter*, 2.17 $\frac{1}{4}$ —(Mr. Bonner, the publisher of *The New York Ledger*, wrote to his friend, *Henry Ward Beecher*, "I saw Niagara Falls this morning for the first time and I came down here to see that other great wonder, *Dexter*, when he trotted in the unprecedented time of 2.17 $\frac{1}{4}$. You know I like to own all the best things, and inasmuch as I could not buy the Falls, I thought I would do the next best thing and buy *Dexter*." He paid \$35,000 for him.)—H. N. Smith's *Goldsmith Maid*, 2.14, W. H. Vander-

bilt's *Maud S.*, 2.08 $\frac{3}{4}$ —(Mr. Vanderbilt refused an offer of \$100,000 for the mare, preferring to sell her for \$40,000 to Mr. Bonner, who never raced his horses.)—Governor Leland Stanford's *Sunol*, 2.08 $\frac{1}{4}$, J. Malcolm Forbes's *Nancy Hanks*, 2.04, *Cicero J. Hamlin's The Abbot*, 2.03 $\frac{1}{4}$, Mr. C. K. G. Billings' *Lou Dillon*, 1.58 $\frac{1}{2}$, and the same owner's *Uhlans* 1.58. A part of this progress in speed is due to the great mechanical improvement in the sulky drawn by the horse and to the better surfacing and grading of race tracks. All records prior to that of *Nancy Hanks* were made with the old-fashioned high-wheel sulky. In 1892 the ball-bearing, bicycle-wheel sulky was introduced, and the record fell 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ seconds. *Nancy Hanks*, trotting to high wheels, could not beat 2.09. Those five seconds are about the difference between the old and the new. But isolated champions are only remarkable as indication of a general development. Today, trotting colts, three-year-olds, have beaten two minutes; a horse to have any value at all, even on the small tracks, must be able to trot in 2.10.

Long Island, New England, and eastern Pennsylvania were early centres for the sport, and trotting tracks were fairly numerous in the 1840's and '50's. However, they were hardly fashionable and the purses were small. Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem, "How the Old Horse Won the Bet," is an amusing description of those boisterous, half-disreputable meetings where trotters were ridden as well as driven—they still are in France. The poet mentions many horses of that time and the better-known jockeys, *Hiram Woodruff*, *Bud Doble*, "whose catarrhal name so fills the nasal trump of fame," *Dan Pfeiffer*, and the illiterate but dandified *Dan Mace*. *Flora Temple* was queen in those days; the little mare with the docked tail won 93 out of 111 contests and retired with winnings of \$113,000. *Flora* was sold by her breeder to a livery stable for \$68; she worked at this plebeian calling until she was five years old, when she made her debut at the Union Course on Long Island.

The end of the Civil War marked a great change in the public's appreciation of trotting. Most of the well-known men of that time—our gilded age—owned and raced or bred trotters. Robert Bonner, newspaper owner, churchman, and philanthropist, probably did more

than any one else to stimulate their vogue. He kept an enormous stable solely for the pleasure of driving on the road and on his private track. He paid over \$600,000 for his horses and for forty years he was ready to bid on any champion or prospective champion that appeared. Mr. Bonner was more than a wealthy enthusiast; he was a very shrewd horseman, one to whom all the leading professional trainers of that day came for advice. Hardly a horse entered his stable which did not, with his training methods, improve its record. The trotting gait is controlled and purified by the balancing of the horse's shoes with weight and the artificial shortening or lengthening of the toe of the hoof. These delicate adjustments, prior to Bonner, had been misunderstood; fast horses were greatly handicapped by their trainer's ignorance of anatomy. Mr. Bonner was not reticent about his theories, but it took the conclusive proof of the stop watch to overcome the conservatism of the professionals.

Rysdyk's Hambletonian, for whom the race is named, was the great sire of the period. Governor Leland Stanford of California founded the Palo Alto Farm with Hambletonian's son *Electioneer* at its head. Every year a stable of his trotters was sent East to race along the Grand Circuit. All the records for two- and three-year-olds were broken by his colts. *Arion* trotted in 2.10 $\frac{3}{4}$ at two and was sold for \$125,000 to J. Malcolm Forbes of Boston. This was the highest price ever paid for a trotting horse, although the Russian Government made a higher offer than this to Mr. Billings for *The Harvester*, which he refused.

Governor Stanford's interest in the development of the breed was also highly scientific. Keen observation caused him to distrust the portrayed action of horses; Gericault's famous picture of the Epsom Derby was the traditional conception of the running horse in motion; the stylized Currier and Ives print was believed to depict accurately the trotter. Governor Stanford engaged the photographer, Muybridge, to conduct a revolutionary experiment. A fifty-yard stretch of track was divided into sections of three feet or so by the finest silk threads. Each of these threads was attached to the shutter of a camera, a horse at speed released the threads with contact. The result was a series of plates revealing ac-

tion in all its detail as we now understand it. The plates, with an essay explaining them, were published by the governor in an elaborate book entitled *The Horse in Motion*, and while the book was ignored in this country except by horsemen, in France its value was immediately recognized. The close series with its record of imperceptible fact is exactly similar to a set of motion-picture stills; Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec painted their race-track pictures from the new viewpoint and for years the critics charged them with wilful distortion.

Estates where trotters were bred dotted the country. Breeding was often a millionaire's hobby and, what is not unusual where horses are concerned, fantastic theories were strenuously advocated and fought over. The pages of *The Spirit of the Times* and *Turf, Field and Farm* were filled with angry debates over the relative merits of stallions, blood lines, the thoroughbred cross. The pseudo-classic vocabulary of the '80's was rich in invective. Rival editors fought the rich men's battles. Obstinate loyalty caused many of the rich men as well as the editors to die poor and disillusioned. Cicero J. Hamlin, owner of Village Farm, sent a telegram of congratulation to a rival breeder on the death of that breeder's highly prized stallion—Mr. Hamlin disapproved of the pedigree. Many years later, Hamlin, out of pique, caused to be destroyed one of his own stallions, a horse that had been the idol of the race-going public. A short time after, Hamlin was killed in an automobile accident and the editor of one of the large turf journals declared this to be a judgment on him for the act of cruelty.

General Grant bred trotters and was often at the races. Ehninger painted him driving Dexter beside Robert Bonner. James Roosevelt bred Gloucester, 2.17, at Hyde Park. Nathan Straus owned many horses; Majolica, 2.14, was the best known. Jay-Eye-See, 2.10, was named for his owner Jerome I. Case, who also owned Phallus, 2.13, and Maxey Cobb. E. H. Harriman paid \$40,000 for Stamboul. John D. Rockefeller and his brother William drove trotters paired. So did Frank Work and W. H. Vanderbilt, great rivals. Mr. Vanderbilt stepped Maud S. and Aldine hitched double a mile in 2.15½ one day. Although he never bet, he offered to

"lend" his pair, Early Rose and Aldine, to his friend C. T. Eastman for a day in order that Eastman might challenge Frank Work's pair, Edward and Dick Swiveler, to a race at \$30,000 a side. Frank Rockefeller raced his stable down the Grand Circuit. General Benjamin Tracy, Secretary of the Navy under Harrison, E. T. Bedford of Standard Oil, H. O. Havemeyer of the Sugar Trust, Marcus Daly, copper king of Butte Root, Mont.—all Mark Twain's nabobs—owned trotters. The atmosphere, a little heavy, a little pompous, seems entirely different from the earlier days when the possession of a good horse was largely a matter of luck. But the miracles still happened: a telegraph operator of Independence, Iowa, named Williams, raised the colt, Axtell, marked him in 2.12 as a three-year-old and sold him for \$105,000. The very sum, however, marks the difference—we were changing rapidly from a nation of villagers, the free and easy Yankee manner had stiffened, and there was an awkward, humorless reliance on big figures. Their coronets never quite seemed to fit our merchant princes. I quote this scene from Hamilton Busby, a turf writer of those days:

"Nancy Hanks trotted in 2.04 at Terre Haute yesterday," I remarked.

"You bring me good news," said Mr. Forbes, as he calmly led the way to the office and placed before us a biscuit and a glass of rare old sherry.

Mr. Hamlin was amazed at the lack of enthusiasm shown by an owner whose mare had won the championship crown of the world, and exclaimed, "You do not seem to warm up much over the news."

The reply was calmly courteous: "I am gratified, but surely you do not expect me to turn a somersault."

The turn of the century brought to the sport a group of new and sensational champions. It also was the time when amateur driving, called "matinee racing" by the turf, was at its height. Many of the new stars were raced by their owners exclusively in such events. Trotting is unique among active sports; it allows the older man—the man able to buy horses—to participate on even terms with youth. Many of the professionals are at the top of their careers in the fifties and sixties. Harry Devereux and Harvey Ernest of Cleveland, Chester Lassal of Boston, J. D. Callery of Pittsburgh, C. K. G. Billings of Chicago, all drove their own horses brilliantly.

Gambling has always followed horse racing, and a gambling scandal occurred in one of these amateur events that did great harm to trotting. It was the indirect cause of the closing of the beautiful Memphis track and because of it Mr. C. K. G. Billings declined ever afterward to compete in public. His mare, Lou Dillon, had won the Memphis Gold Cup in 1903, defeating E. E. Smathers's Major Delmar. Many believed that she would be unable to repeat the performance in 1904, as Smathers's gelding was better than ever that year, lowering his record at every start, while the mare seemed to be slow coming to her great speed. She regained her old form, however, a month before the race. In the informal betting the day of the Gold Cup she was favorite, but there was a surprising amount of Major Delmar money. The race was quickly decided. Mr. Billings had to pull Lou Dillon up after a half mile as she was in extreme distress. She had been poisoned and it was doubted for days whether she would live. The cup went to E. E. Smathers, and although there were many rumors about the race and the people responsible for the poisoning, the facts did not come out until several years later when the Memphis Association sued E. E. Smathers for the return of the cup. It was charged that the doping was arranged by Spear, Smathers's trainer, and a ne'er-do-well brother of Millard Sanders, who trained Lou Dillon. Shortly after this, Smathers sold all his trotters, turning to the thoroughbreds. Spear, banished from the trotting tracks, tried for years and with strong influence behind him, to obtain a license from the Jockey Club to train runners. He was never successful.

The story of the turf at that period is full of extravagant incidents. People still remember how James Butler, then an owner of trotters, backed Dan Patch to win at Brighton Beach. Dan Patch sold in the pools at a thousand dollars a ticket and the betting went on for hours. He lost a heat that day which only made the betting heavier, but he won the race. Dan Patch never lost a race. Thomas W. Lawson, the stock-market plunger and the author of *Frenzied Finance*, played his trotters with the same recklessness he showed in the Street. At Lexington he bought Boralma the morning of the Transylvania Stake and bet \$25,000 on him in the pools.

Just before the race was called he announced from the stand that, if he won, the purse would go to the Lexington Hospital. There was a jam in the first heat of that race and Boralma came in last, behind the red flag, eighty yards back, which automatically eliminates a horse. The judges held a consultation and decided, to the probably justified annoyance of all who had bet against him, that Boralma should be placed for unavoidable interference. Boralma went on to win. As the purse was considerably less than the betting involved, it was felt that Lawson had played a very wise hand. In spite of all the eccentric changes in Lawson's hobbies, his affection for that horse lasted. Even at the end, worried and ill, his fortune gone, he always gave Boralma a comfortable home. Boralma's last race was just as sensational as his first under Lawson's ownership. E. E. Smathers had bought The Abbot at the C. J. Hamlin dispersal sale and Lawson challenged him to a race at Hartford's Charter Oak Park, \$20,000 a side, the track to add \$10,000, winner take all. This made the largest first-money ever raced for, since even when the Hambletonian is worth \$70,000 the winner receives only 60 per cent. Pop Geers was substituted for Spear to drive The Abbot. Spear was too nervous to drive. Boralma went hopelessly lame in the second heat and had to be drawn. The Abbot walked over.

C. K. G. Billings gave up driving in the matinee races but he did not give up owning fast horses or driving them for records. Two of his performances were especially remarkable: he rode Uhlan an eighth of a mile at Lexington in thirteen seconds (Mr. Billings weighed 190 pounds at the time) and he drove Lou Dillon, hitched to a skeleton wagon, a quarter in twenty-five seconds at the old Harlem Speedway. The second of these brushes was at the rate of 1.40—running horse time—in fact, the last quarter of a mile running-race is seldom so fast. This is about the limit of harness-horse speed. Only one faster performance comes to memory and that, while it appears to have been reliably timed, is not official. They say that Mart Demarest stepped the pacer Prince Alert an eighth in .12½.

In 1911, C. K. G. Billings had three world's champions: Lou Dillon, 1.58½, champion mare; Uhlan, 1.58, gelding, holder of the fastest harness record of

any kind; The Harvester, 2.01, champion stallion. He took this stable, with Doctor Charles Tanner as trainer, for a tour of the European countries interested in trotting—not to race or for paid exhibitions, but as a demonstration of the quality of American stock. The horses made a particularly strong impression in Austria and Russia. I have already mentioned the offer, said to have been \$150,000, made by the Russian Government for The Harvester. The trip had practical importance; European buyers were more than ever encouraged to come here for fine blood. Now we have a great market there; most of our fast record horses go abroad. Three of the last four winners of the Hambletonian, for example, were sold to foreigners: Calumet Butler and Walter Dear went to Germany, The Marchioness to Italy.

Today, the best of America's trotters race at a series of mile-track meetings, lasting a week or two weeks each, called the Grand Circuit. This is to trotting what the big leagues are to baseball, and there is, by the way, a good deal of similarity of spirit and atmosphere in these two "national" sports. The organization was founded in 1873, comprising four cities: Cleveland, Buffalo, Utica, and Springfield, Mass. Purses amounted to \$170,000. Today Cleveland, Buffalo, Toledo, Salem, N. H., Goshen, N. Y., Syracuse, Indianapolis, Springfield, Ill., and Lexington, Ky., give meetings, and the purses total over \$600,000 each year. Mr. E. Roland Harriman is president of the organization, succeeding the late Harry Devereux of Cleveland. Dates are allotted by a board of stewards during the winter in New York City. There are, too, several important chains of half-mile track meetings: the Bay State, which includes most of the larger New England cities, the Ohio Short Ship Circuit, the William Penn Circuit, and, finally, the county fairs.

The Hambletonian Stake, a futurity for three-year-old trotters, has been raced the last four years at Goshen, N. Y. Widely advertised by the promoter of the Goshen meeting, Mr. Walter Cane, and because of its large value, it has come to attract more attention than any other trotting race. This year 30,000 people saw Mary Reynolds win. Other races, with smaller purses but with longer traditions, are the Kentucky Furturities for two- and three-year-olds, the Matron and the National Stallion for

three-year-olds and the Rainy Day for two-year-olds at Cleveland. The \$14,000 Fox Stake for two-year-old pacers at Indianapolis is another fixture, while for aged horses there are the Transylvania and Walnut Hall Cup races at Lexington. These are a few of the older races that it is the ambition of every trotting owner to win. The famous old Charter Oak purse for fast-record trotters will not be raced this year but its place is taken by the \$10,000 Parker House at Alan J. Wilson's Salem track. The Governor's Cup for 2.10 trotters will probably be renewed at Syracuse after a considerable lapse, during which the State Fair was given over to the runners. Until the depression, Toledo and Kalamazoo each gave a \$25,000 purse for 2.12 pacers. The latter was called the American Pacing Derby and was usually the biggest betting race of the year. The Canadians, who are clever horsemen with a pacer, always save their best for this race. In 1928 there were three \$25,000 purses in three successive weeks at Windsor, Conn., Toledo, and Kalamazoo. Fred Thrower's big stallion Grattan Bars came down from Ontario and won them all. Winnings are hardly as important as they would seem at first sight because the owner must make graduated payments from the time the entries open, months before the race, until, with the final starting fee, he has paid 6 per cent of the purse. After the race the purse is usually divided: 50 per cent to the winner, 25 per cent to the second, 15 and 10 per cent to the third and fourth horses. The tracks are not able to support their purses with gate money or the betting cut, the attendance is too small; it really comes down to the owners supplying the money for which they race.

The betting is pool selling, a method once common to runners and trotters in this country but long discarded with the runners. It takes up too much time and cannot make use of the small bet—the small bet, which, multiplied by thousands, provides the revenue for running tracks. The auctioneer lets the crowd establish a favorite at a set figure, say \$100, then the rest of the horses in the race are sold out at prices varying according to their supposed chance in relation to the favorite. A ticket sold on each horse in the race completes one pool—the "take" is 6 per cent. After one heat of a trotting race is decided,

the betters have a chance to return to the pools and hedge; the horse winning the first heat is automatically favorite now and the rest are grouped together as a "field" selling against him. The auctioneer is known and appreciated for his humor as well as for his speed in selling. Eli Krutch handles most of the Grand Circuit tracks; Frank Muzsey sells in New England and New York.

The horses are driven by their trainers, who are rarely young men. They have a position of authority in the sport; in fact the public is apt to think of the horses as "theirs" rather than the owners—they wear their own colors. Edward (Pop) Geers was probably the most widely known of trotting trainers. He was seventy-six when he was killed in 1924, driving a race at Wheeling, W. Va. The public knew his absolute integrity—they sensed his domination of the race he was driving in; all the attributes, fine hands, judgment of pace, the ability to get from the horse just a little better than his best, were his. He was loved because he loved horses. Walter Cox, brother of ex-Governor Channing Cox of Massachusetts, has made a fortune selling horses. His motto has been "let somebody else own him." A shrewd dealer, a careful trainer, he drives a race with the patience and cunning of a poker player. They still call him "long-shot Cox" in New England. He trains for Walter Cane, owner of the Goshen track, but he has horses for outside owners, too—Aaron Williams, Sanford Small, the Ottinger brothers. Up to a few years ago, Thomas W. Murphey had the largest trotting stable in training. Among his owners were Henry Oliver of Pittsburgh, Colonel Ruppert, Irving Gleason, A. J. Ward. For the most part Murphey did not wait to develop horses; he paid large prices for what he thought would win the stakes. Much of his buying was from Cox. Murphey left the trotters in 1928 to train Mrs. Whitney's Greentree Stable, bringing out Twenty Grand for her. Harry Brusie is from Connecticut. He made his reputation as a "catch driver," ready to get up behind another man's horse and drive him better than his own trainer. He took bad-acting horses, horses that were incorrigible in other hands, and made them like to race. He had a long and picturesque career on the half-mile tracks until a few

years ago when he began to develop colts and was quickly recognized as one of the leading colt men of the country. He won the Fox Stake two years in succession. Brusie's son, Lyman, is also a fine trainer. He drove Invader in this year's Hambletonian, winning a heat and getting second money. Ben White of Lexington has brought out more two- and three-year-old champions than any other man. He trains for W. N. Reynolds, president of Reynolds Tobacco Company, Mr. H. N. Hanan, the shoe manufacturer, H. L. Knight of Chicago, among others. Nat Ray was a famous steeplechase rider in the days of Mr. Harry Worcester Smith and Mr. George Saportas. When he put on too much weight to ride over the jumps he turned to the trotters, making a name for himself as a race driver at the rough and ready Canadian Ice meetings. Later, on the Grand Circuit, he campaigned the stars Peter the Brewer and Guy McKinney, winner of the first Hambletonian in 1926. Will Caton went in the '90's with his father to Russia. He was the leading driver there before the Revolution, three times winning the Russian Derby. He trained at one period for the Grand Duke Michael. Will Caton returned to America to stay in 1919, but his brother Sam became the best known of Russian drivers under the Soviet, for ten years heading the annual list of race winners. Will Dickerson trains for the Arden Stable of Mr. and Mrs. E. Roland Harriman. They are both interested in driving themselves. Last year Mr. Harriman drove in a colt race at Goshen and three years ago his wife drove the pacer, Highland Scott, an exhibition mile in 1.59 1/4 at the same meeting—a performance that any reinsman might be proud of. The Harrimans have their own breeding farm near Goshen and have stocked it with the best of the horses Dickerson has raced for them.

The breeding has become more and more centralized. Today the majority of the farms are in the blue-grass region of Kentucky or in southern Ohio. Mr. L. V. Harkness founded Walnut Hall Farm in the '90's. Doctor Ogden M. Edwards, Jr., carries it on today. This and the Calumet Farm of the late W. N. Wright, the baking-powder manufacturer, are the two major establishments. Their policy has been to enter their colts in all futurities and then to send

each year's crop of yearlings, without exception, to the Old Glory Sale in New York. In this way the buyers have the assurance that no "stars" are being withheld. This year's average for the yearlings was way below former figures, of course. The top was Walnut Hall's Pilgrim, who sold for \$4500. Last year Calumet Farm's Calumet Dick brought \$13,500. Other famous farms are David M. Look's Castleton, J. L. Dodge's Holyrood, W. N. Reynolds's Arrowpoint—all at Lexington; J. J. Mooney's Peninsular Farm at Columbus, Ohio; Senator Farm at Indianapolis, formerly owned by Tom Taggart of French Lick, the Democratic political boss, and now belonging to E. J. Baker, nephew of John W. Gates; and the farm of the Hanover Shoe Company, Hanover, Pa. The small breeder has had to give up. There is no market now except for the best, no way to absorb the products not good enough for the track, where, year by year, the standard is higher.

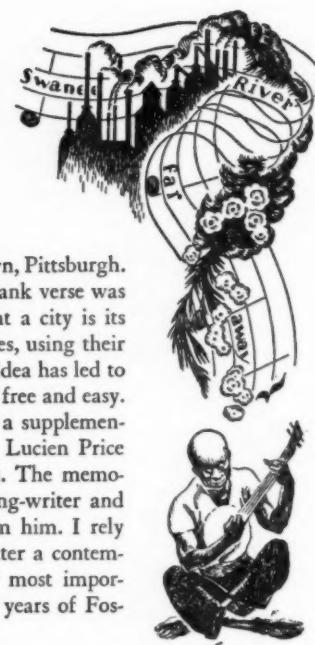
Even if Charter Oak closes its gates there are plenty of other more modern tracks to continue trotting races. There will be long summer afternoons of sport at Cleveland's North Randall, at Goshen, Salem, and Lexington. The horses, free, their easy movements unimpeded, only the light sulky with the crouched driver behind them, will turn and come down in formation for the starter's word. They swing into the turn, the drivers leaning against the bank, a horse coming from behind on the outside, the driver's arms wide, his whip tap-tapping, fairly lifting the trotter into his brush. They turn into the back stretch, the hoof beats and the high voices of the drivers fading as they go. And again for home, maybe three or four abreast, the last horses vague in the August dust, they take the bend like the straightening of a whip-lash; the even pound of the hoofs comes again to the stands. The whips crack and the drivers call with the strain of the finish. And afterwards, pulled up, unchecked, the horses return to the paddock, their heads low, their coats soaked; a quiet dejected grace in contrast to the flaring mane, the brilliant stroke, the pitch of contest. This crowd will have forgotten whether they won or lost money. For a moment the pulse of their world is speed and there is gratitude for the intensity of the spectacle.



Stephen Foster

(MEMO FOR 1894)

By Haniel Long



For twenty years I have wanted to write a poem on my home town, Pittsburgh. Twice I tried it in blank verse, but putting Pittsburgh into blank verse was like putting Vulcan into a dress suit. It occurred to me that a city is its citizens, and that I might allow Pittsburghers to speak for themselves, using their own words as uttered in moments of emergency or reflection. This idea has led to my *Pittsburgh Memoranda* assuming their own costume, somewhat free and easy.

Carnegie and Berkmann wrote autobiographies; Winkler wrote a supplementary life of Carnegie; Lucien Scaife wrote Doctor Brashear's life, Lucien Price the life of Demmler, Colonel Harvey the life of Frick, and so on. The memorandum that follows deals with Stephen Foster. As he was a song-writer and said what he had to say in his songs, there is little to quote from him. I rely on the brief and moving memoirs by Milligan and Nevin, the latter a contemporary of Foster's, and on what records still remain, finding the most important in Milligan. Nobody seems to know much about the last ten years of Foster's life, or about George Cooper.

Another Pittsburgher, another life, another way of life:
30th anniversary of Stephen Foster's death, 13 January 1894.

(Milligan, *Stephen Collins Foster*): ". . . no other single individual produced so many of those songs . . . called folk-songs. . . .

All things must have a beginning . . . every folk-song is first born in the heart of some one person, whose spirit is so finely attuned to the inward struggle which is the history of the soul of man, that when he seeks for his own self-expression, he at the same time gives voice to that 'vast multitude who die and give no sign' . . ."

A life "sadly out of harmony with its environment"; and yet, if I may make the songs of a people I care not.

The boy was born on a fourth of July—not the fourth of Gettysburg and Vicksburg nor the fourth of Santiago but the fourth of 1826 when Jefferson died at high noon and Adams at sunset.

Harmony, Pa., 4 May 1832—Mrs. Foster to her son William: ". . . the little children go to school with quite as happy faces

as though the world had no thorns in it, and I confess there would be but few if we would all follow the scriptures, in which we would be made strong. . . . Stephen has a drum and marches about after the old way with a feather in his hat and a girdle round his waist, whistling *Auld Lang Syne*. . . . There still remains something perfectly original about him."

Something perfectly original, which was to give him trouble when he went to school, and afterwards.

Youngstown, 14 January 1837—"dear Father: I wish you to send me a commic songster for you promised to. If I had my pensyl I could rule my paper or if I had the money to buy black ink—but if I had my whistle I w'd be so taken with it I do not think I w'd write a tall. . . .

Stephen."

His "ittle pizano" was his sister's guitar. "Not until twenty years later was the first upright piano brought across the mountains."

Senator Kingsbury of Minnesota: "Stephen and I often played truant together, going barefoot, gathering wild strawberries by shady streams. It shocked me to see him cast away his fine hose when spoiled by perspiration or muddy water. . . .

His execution on the flute the genius of melody."

Youngstown, 7 August 1840—Mrs. Foster to her son William: ". . . as to Stephen, I leave everything regarding the future to your own judgment, West Point or the Navy, I have no choice; you are not only his Brother, but his Father; and I trust all his feelings will ascend to you as his Patron. . . ."

"Dear William, there is a good fire place in my room and if you will just say the word I will have a fire

in it at nights and learn something. Don't forget my waistcoat at the tailor's. Your affectionate brother Stephen."

" . . . people liked to hear the boy sing *Zip Coon* and *Longtail Blue* . . . such music as he came in contact with was so associated with idleness and dissipation as to be regarded at best only as an amiable weakness . . . "

And the boy himself began to write songs—wrote one about a good time coming: "Little children shall not toil, under or above the soil, but shall play in healthful fields in the good time coming. . . ."

Peters & Field Co.,
Cincinnati, October 1846.

And attended a Pittsburgh theatre on Fifth Street, "an unpretentious structure rudely built of boards but sufficient to secure the comfort of the few who dared to face the consequences and lend their patronage to an establishment under the ban of the Scotch-Irish Calvinists." (Nevin.)

And wrote more songs, and kept on writing songs—*Nelly Bly* *Nelly was a Lady* *Dolcy Jones* etc. *Æthiopian Melodies*, by the Author of *Uncle Ned* and *O Susanna*,
Firth, Pond & Co., New York 1850,
so that at twenty-three he had set his country singing.

Allegheny City, 21 June 1853,
sister Henrietta to brother Morrison:
"How sorry I feel for poor Stephy, though when I read your letter I was not at all surprised at the news in regard to him and— (name scratched out). Last winter I felt convinced— (three lines scratched, ending in the word "mistake"). . . . May God lead him in the ways of peace, fill his heart with that love which alone is satisfying."

Stephen had left home, was in various places, finally stayed in New York, wrote fourteen more songs, among them *Sewanee River*—

(Milligan) "Aside from one or two national airs born of great historical crises . . . probably the most widely known . . . song ever written . . . translated into every language, sung by millions . . . in some subtle and instinctive way expresses the homesick yearning over the past and faraway which is the common emotional heritage of the race. . . ."

Pittsburgh, 3 March 1854,
brother Dunning to brother William—
"Have you heard anything from Stephen lately? It is a subject of much

anxiety to me; notwithstanding his foolish and unaccountable course, I hope he will continue to make a comfortable living for himself. . . ."

(Nevin) "Herz, Sivori, Ole Bull and Thalberg were ready to approve his genius, and chose his melodies about which to weave their witcheries."

January 1855, "the mother of the celebrated song writer" died. In the obituaries Stephen's name is mentioned before that of his father, twice mayor of Allegheny City, or that of his brother, builder of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

And no one knows much more about Stephen except when he came to die.

N. Y. City, 12 January 1864.
"Morrison Foster, Esq., Your brother Stephen is lying in Bellevue Hospital . . . very sick. . . . He desires me to ask you to send him some pecuniary assistance . . . If possible he would like to see you in person. . . . George Cooper."

Cleveland, 14 January 1864
(by telegraph from New York)—
"To Morrison Foster, Stephen is dead. Come on. George Cooper."

"I received a message saying my friend had met with an accident . . . dressed hurriedly and went to 15 Bowery . . . found him lying on the floor in the hall, blood oozing from a cut in his throat & with a bad bruise on his forehead. . . . Steve never wore night clothes . . . lay there naked . . . suffering horribly. . . . The doctor arrived . . . started to sew up Steve's throat with black thread. 'Haven't you any white thread?' I asked, and he said no. . . . I decided the doctor was not much good . . . went down stairs and got Steve a big drink of rum, which seemed to help him. . . . We put his clothes on him & took him to the hospital. . . . He seemed terribly weak & his eyelids kept fluttering. . . . I went back to the hospital to see him next day. . . . He said nothing had been done for him, and he couldn't eat the food. . . ."

Next day they said, 'Your friend is dead.' Steve's body had been sent down to the morgue. There was an old man sitting there smoking a pipe. I told him what I wanted & he said,

'Go look for him.' . . . I went around peering into the coffins until I found Steve's body. . . . Next day, his brother Morrison and Steve's widow arrived." (George Cooper.)

Bellevue Hospital, Ward 11, Stephen Foster, Died Jan. 13th: Coat, pants, vest, hat, shoes, overcoat Jan 10th 1864. Rec'd of Mr. Foster ten shillings charge for Stephen C. Foster while in hospital. Wm. E. White, warden.

Died and went naked into the next world as all men must.

"There was a tendency of habit grown insidiously upon him . . . against which, as no one better than this writer knows, he wrestled with earnestness indescribable," this writer being Nevin. And Morrison Foster, thus, to an editor: ". . . the public knew not *him*, but only *of him*, his poetry and music being the only visible sign

that such a person really existed at all . . . reference to certain peculiarities is not only out of place but a cruel tearing open of wounds, which the grave should close forever."

And yet, Morrison Foster, your brother being in a certain sense not only Pittsburgh's greatest but America's—

coat, pants, vest, hat, shoes: these the grave can close, but can it, should it, close the wounds and what caused them?

"Who can say what would have been the sum of Franz Schubert's achievements had he been born in Pittsburgh in 1826?" (Milligan.) What in fact was the sum of anybody's achievements who couldn't be a farmer or a manufacturer or a trader or a politician or a doctor or a lawyer—couldn't help materially in the young city's life? what is the sum of their achievements today, these unfortunates?

. . . the damages, the damages. . . .

Up from his blood and entrails through years of blackness came the ghosts. He did not give a little charity, gave himself, rendered up the old ghosts, kept himself a gateway for songs of homelessness, despair and tears, agonies of a foundling crying for the harmony out of which he was born.

Thirty-eight years it took his world to kill him, the fragile male nature fighting not only the enemies outside him, but those inside, fear, and a sense of guilt—his love for his good mother, whose love of him wavered at his gift, seeing the gift as a hindrance from a useful life ending in comfort and money—his love for his sister who thought the love of God would work out better for Stephen than a human love, putting this confusion between the Door and the Temple the Door opens into—and the magnificent brother, builder of the P. R. R.—and the father, twice mayor of Allegheny City—

and the other brothers, fine fellows marching along content in the regiment, Stephen at their side, wistful, out of step, needing support in a nature that amounted to rebellion, finding support in no one near him where it could count, but always vague—his country's love of his songs being like a surf that breaks a long distance off. Doubtless real women lived then, as ever, who would have seen him as a gateway for the ghosts, freed his limbs and heart, intoxicated him and not with whiskey; but he did not find such women, looked for them no doubt, but did not find them. And so there was a habit grown insidiously upon him so that he would not ask himself if it was right to listen to the murmur of blood and bone within him, to try to catch what he could of a melody very strange and disturbing, brain-throttled, fear-stifled, yet going all through him.

"Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain."

Orange leaf of a moon, holding on to the horizon, what do you see in the last hours of night?

If you knew what dreaming means,
says one of Strauss's love songs,
If you knew it, you would come to me.

But when you do not come not you, nor I, more than a sparrow or than twigs in twilight shall leave on earth a token of our presence.

"If I had my pensyl I could rule my paper but if I had my whistle I w'd be so taken with it I do not think I w'd write a tall."

I w'd only whistle, all day long I w'd whistle; but if I were still unhappy and my heart ached— then, as it is writ in Proverbs, even in the Book beloved of the Calvinists: "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts; let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

West Point or the Navy, his mother had no choice; but cursed with a something perfectly original he pursued his foolish and unaccountable course, this our beloved, O Pittsburghers, till he died and went naked into the next world

as all men must, along with Carnegie, Henry Phipps, Gladstone, Rob't A. Pinkerton, Grover Cleveland, and Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov—

the next world where, it is said, the soul of a man matters.

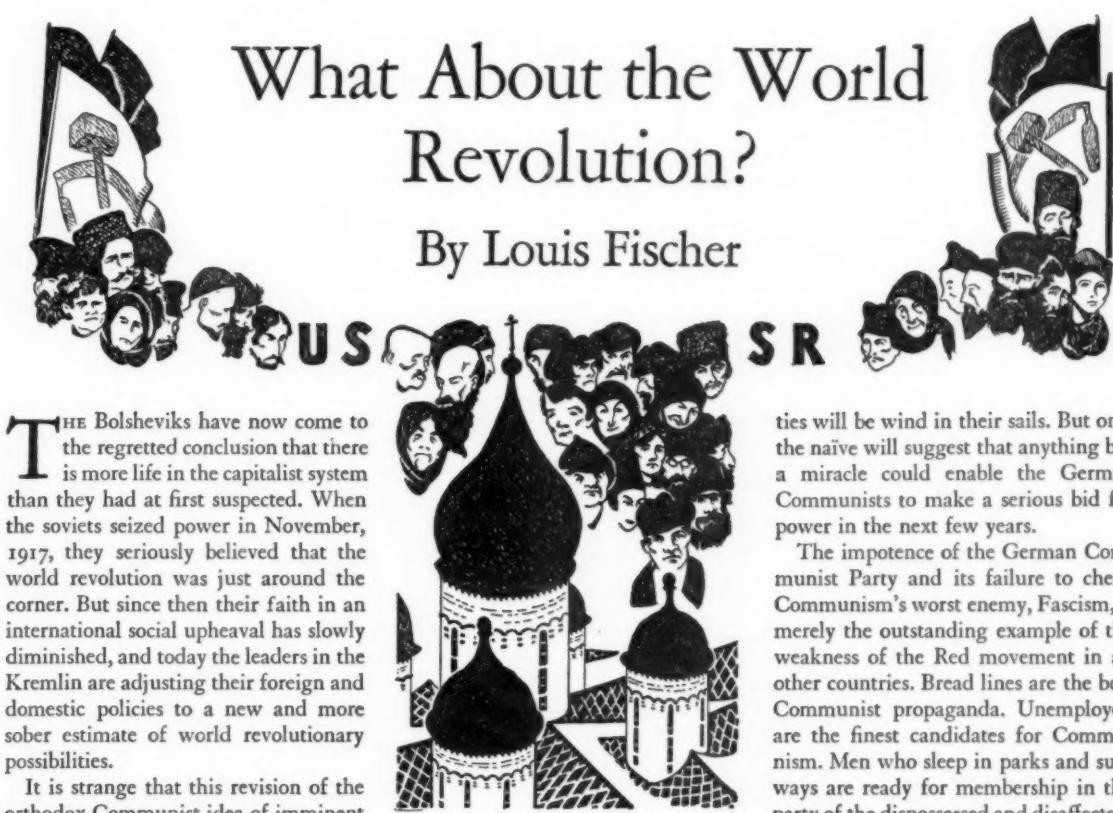
This our beloved . . .
the day he died
". . . horrors, portioned to a giant nerve,
Oft made Hyperion ache."

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in world affairs today

What About the World Revolution?

By Louis Fischer



THE Bolsheviks have now come to the regretted conclusion that there is more life in the capitalist system than they had at first suspected. When the soviets seized power in November, 1917, they seriously believed that the world revolution was just around the corner. But since then their faith in an international social upheaval has slowly diminished, and today the leaders in the Kremlin are adjusting their foreign and domestic policies to a new and more sober estimate of world revolutionary possibilities.

It is strange that this revision of the orthodox Communist idea of imminent revolution should have taken place during the worst crisis ever experienced by the capitalist system. One would have thought that the universal distress, wholesale unemployment, and widespread mental depression of the last four years would only confirm the Bolsheviks' confidence in the impending doom of the bourgeoisie. But this has not been the case. For the very depth of the Western world's crisis has served to reveal the tremendous hidden reserves on which capitalist countries could call in time of stress.

The rise of Hitler to power administered the last blow to the old Bolshevik contention that capitalism was on its last legs. The Marxists, to be sure, argue that Hitler cannot solve Germany's economic problems. They submit that Mussolini established himself in a period of world prosperity while the Nazis are entangled in a descending business curve

which will drag them down to a miserable living standard. All these things may be true. Yet the fact remains that the German Communist Party was, with the exception of the Russian, the strongest constituent of the Third International; it had mustered as many as five and a half million votes in several German national elections; and still it could not offer the slightest resistance to Hitler's accession to power. If Hitler accomplishes nothing else he will book to his credit the killing, imprisonment, and beating of thousands of Communists, the smashing of their organizations, the sequestration of their funds, the suppression of their publications, and the diminution of their activities. The German Communists, of course, continue their work underground, and they will long be a thorn in Adolf Hitler's side. Germany's material difficul-

ties will be wind in their sails. But only the naïve will suggest that anything but a miracle could enable the German Communists to make a serious bid for power in the next few years.

The impotence of the German Communist Party and its failure to check Communism's worst enemy, Fascism, is merely the outstanding example of the weakness of the Red movement in all other countries. Bread lines are the best Communist propaganda. Unemployed are the finest candidates for Communism. Men who sleep in parks and subways are ready for membership in the party of the dispossessed and disaffected. Yet in the United States, with about 15,000,000 workless men and women, the Communist Party has fewer than 15,000 members, and the Foster-Ford ticket in the last Presidential elections gathered no more than 103,000 out of 39,000,000 votes. In England, France, and many other nations the Communists' lack of real progress has been equally marked.

This striking phenomenon has not escaped the eye of the keen observers among the Bolsheviks. They are as certain as ever that the world revolution should come and will come. Capitalism, they hold, is not eternal. Other systems of society have passed into history. There was a time without capitalism. There must be a future without capitalism. It will some day end. But *when?* That is now the big question.

Without wavering on the inevitability of a world socialist régime and con-

vinced that events even in Germany are steadily bringing it nearer, the Bolsheviks, nevertheless, have revised their notions regarding the tempo of world revolution. Karl Marx once said: "Proletarians of the world, unite. You have nothing but your chains to lose." But many workers, apparently, have more than fetters to lose, and therefore refuse to band together under the sickle and hammer. The Communists, it is true, boast many more sympathizers than members. In a strike, a whole factory force may place itself temporarily under Red leadership. Yet in no country is the working class ready or able to attempt the establishment of a soviet government. This is too obvious a fact to require elaboration. Nor, despite economic ills in many lands, does a revolutionary situation seem to be developing.

Leon Trotsky, Moscow's most accomplished and vituperative critic, lays this sad state of affairs at the door of the Kremlin. He maintains that the Third International has been inefficient, badly directed, mistaken in its policies, and guided by principles calculated to stem rather than to encourage revolutionary movements. But the Communist International was equally ineffective when Leon Trotsky formulated its program and before that organization operated under the sign of Stalinism. Between 1917 and 1924, when Trotsky was in power, the fires of popular discontent rose sky-high in Italy, Hungary, Germany, England, Ireland, India, Egypt, etc., etc. Yet in each case, the bourgeoisie succeeded in reasserting itself. Since the war, capitalism has been in a ticklish situation in any number of countries. Nowhere, however, have the exploited classes walked to victory in the footsteps of the Russian Bolsheviks.

Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Zinoviev and all the other big Reds thought in the beginning that the Russian soviets would be an example and inspiration to subversive movements elsewhere. In 1918, 1919, and 1921, and then again in 1923, they were quite sanguine about the spread of socialism. But they were disappointed. In 1919 soviet governments actually existed in Hungary and Bavaria. Did they fall because of Lenin's and Trotsky's mistaken Comintern tactics or for some deeper reason? Stalin, at that time, was not the determining personality he is today. In 1920 Lenin

attempted to convert Poland into a soviet state. He subsequently admitted that he had miscalculated. He had expected the Polish peasants and workers to rally to the aid of the advancing Red Army. And they failed to rally.

Leon Trotsky has launched some of his bitterest attacks against Stalin on account of the latter's alleged mismanagement of the Chinese revolution between 1924 and 1927. Stalin was certainly guilty of some serious errors. He insisted, for instance, on Communist cooperation with Chiang Kai-shek at a time when that general had become frankly counter-revolutionary and was being used by the bourgeoisie to suppress Communism. Borodin's strategy of a Communist-Kuomintang bloc worked in 1924, 1925, and 1926, but ceased to advance the cause of revolution after that. These Trotskyist strictures are correct. But it does not follow that the outright soviet revolution which Trotsky advocated for China would have been a success. On the contrary, every sign indicates that it would have been a dismal fiasco as expensive to China as to Soviet Russia. Between sixty and seventy million Chinese north and south of the Yangtse today live under soviet rule. Since 1929 Red armies have held large slices of Chinese territory and have repulsed all of Nanking's efforts to dislodge them. Nevertheless, China is no whit nearer Communism than it was in 1911. The present Chinese soviets consist exclusively of peasants whose chief aim is the totally un-Bolshevik one of acquiring land for private cultivation. It would not be difficult to prove, therefore, that the Reds of the Yangtse region may yet become the backbone of a regenerated capitalist China. Trotsky himself has argued along this line. He has shown that these rural soviets no sooner stretch out toward a city or the coast than they are driven back by the combined forces of the foreign imperialists, and the Chinese militarists. He conceives, indeed, of the possibility of an open conflict between the village Reds and urban Chinese workers. The Chinese proletariat, moreover, is not under Communist influence. There are fewer Communists in the Chinese party today than three years ago. And without working-class collaboration, even 60,000,000 people under soviet administration in inland districts do not bring China nearer to being a

united soviet republic. If the Communist International or the Chinese Communists tried to set up a China-wide Red state it would be drowned in the blood of the masses. That would have been the result in 1926 or 1927 too.

The entire outlook for world revolution as well as for revolution in individual countries is indeed so dark that many Bolsheviks have commenced to suspect that only an international war will precipitate the next Bolshevik upheaval in some capitalist nation. This, needless to say, is not orthodox doctrine. The official thesis continues to stress the chances of revolt. But deep in their hearts and minds the Bolsheviks know that their great dream is further from realization than ever.

The recession of world revolutionary prospects is an indubitable fact. It suggests that the failure of Communism to gain many adherents in most bourgeois countries and to achieve final victory outside of Russia cannot be due simply to mistaken Comintern strategy. A list of the Communist International's errors of judgment and policy would stretch three times around the Equator. But that in itself cannot explain the consistent weakness of Communist movements under the most favorable circumstances. The British Reds may pride themselves on an increase in membership from 4000 to 7000 in three years. However, if that is all they can achieve with 2,000,000 permanently unemployed and a working class of about 12,000,000, there must be something fundamentally wrong. There may be something wrong with the whole set of principles which guides the Comintern's actions.

I think I can outline the main reasons why Communism triumphed in Russia and has failed until now to establish itself elsewhere. In pre-revolutionary Russia, the capitalist class was small and weak. The middle class was of negligible strength. The workers, on the other hand, suffered from terrible exploitation and horrible living conditions. They owned no property and had no property sense. They really had nothing but chains to lose. This oppressed proletariat could, at the moment of revolutionary crisis in 1917, count on the support of the peasants who were poor and underfed, and whose land hunger the Czarist feudal régime could not satisfy. This was the combination of cir-

cumstances which produced Soviet Russia. Now in most major nations the bourgeoisie is neither as stupid, as impotent nor as decadent as in monarchical Russia. Industrial countries have no such land problem as the one which tormented the lowly mujhik. And the workingmen, certainly in Western states, are either part capitalists or they are infected with capitalist psychology and hope some day to become owners. Hope is a most effective bulwark against Bolshevism.

On the whole, the majority of workingmen in industrial countries are either indifferent to labor politics and unorganized, or enrolled in reformist trade unions and parties which believe in democracy, liberalism and co-operation with the bourgeoisie. In various places, the Communists have succeeded in driving deep wedges into these solid labor phalanxes. But none of their victories has been permanent. Nowhere has the mass of the proletariat accepted Communist leadership for any length of time.

This is not just an accident, or, as Trotsky would have it, the consequence of bad leadership. The cause must lie in the circumstance that many millions of workingmen still feel they have a stake in capitalism. They do not wish to overthrow it.

This condition, the Communist will contend, is temporary. But while it lasts, the world revolution must wait. The Russian Bolsheviks, judging the planet by their own country, underestimated the loyalty of the Western worker to his ruling classes. They seemed to forget that bourgeois culture was employed to convince the under-dog that he was the equal of his boss. And the Bolsheviks forgot something even more cardinal. They forgot the middle class. They forgot the millions of capitalistic farmers, small traders, professional people and white-collared employees who constitute a large part of the population of Europe and America and who identify their interests with those of the big capitalists. Yet it is this middle class which in Italy and Germany has been the chief support of Fascism. Apparently, the middle class must have its political inning before the proletariat of the West is called on to take the reins of power. In the meantime, the Communists can only husband their strength and prepare for "the day."

No man will venture to fix the date. At best one can sketch the circumstances. The advanced nations of the world will be ready for the social revolution when the capitalist class is seriously weakened by a prolonged crisis or war or both; when, in addition, the middle class has been impoverished and robbed of its faith in a pleasant capitalist future; and when the working class, similarly disillusioned but well-organized and properly led, can muster enough middle-class support to tip the scales against the ruling capitalists.

Until all these developments eventuate, a long time will probably elapse. What can the Soviet Government do in the interval? Leon Trotsky, enjoying the enviable luxury of a statesman relieved of political responsibility, demands, in effect, that Moscow sacrifice the best interests of the Russian revolution to further the cause of international revolt. For without the spread of socialism abroad, he argues, you cannot build socialism in the Soviet Union. Yet in 1923, when the German Communists were preparing to launch a revolution, Trotsky, as Russia's Commissar of War, announced that the Red Army would not march to their assistance, and his words very likely did much to check the ardor of the German workers. Nevertheless, the readiness to subordinate the Russian revolution in order to hasten the world uprising lies deeply imbedded in Trotsky's political philosophy. He fought on this point with Lenin. In 1918, the Kaiser handed the new Soviet Government a dictated peace at the point of the sword. Lenin said they had to sign. They were too weak. Trotsky, however, objected. If we come to an agreement with the imperialistic German Government, the German proletariat, he insisted, will regard us as deserters, and we will thus ruin the chances of a Soviet Germany. Whereupon Lenin replied: "Germany is only pregnant with revolution, while here in Russia we have a perfectly healthy baby which must be saved."

This Leninist idea of safeguarding the Russian revolution in the hand instead of grasping for foreign revolutions in the bush today thoroughly dominates Soviet foreign politics.

The Kremlin's more philosophical attitude toward the world revolution plus its great concentration on Russia's serious national economic and political

problems have resulted in a neglect of the Comintern which is rather resented by many foreign Communists. The events which accompanied the accession of Hitler to power added vehemence to this sentiment. Loyal German and Central European Communists whom I encountered recently in Paris and Prague did not disguise their regret at the manner in which the Soviet Union reacted to the Nazi overthrow. When all the world protested against Hitlerist atrocities the Soviet press noted them but for several weeks maintained a mysterious silence about general developments in Germany. While thousands of German Communists were being tortured in the Third Reich, Moscow continued to cultivate friendly diplomatic relations with the Wilhelmstrasse. And, whether it is true or not, the impression has spread among German émigrés in France and Czechoslovakia that Russia showed no burning desire to welcome German Communists who had been forced to flee the Nazi terror. All these feelings, rumors, and impressions agitate the nervous atmosphere of German radical circles and of refugee groups outside of Germany. There is no doubt, to say the least, that the circumstances attending the Nazi upheaval have not made the Communist International or the Soviet Union more popular among Left-minded Europeans. One even meets persons who think, along with the world's most reactionary statesmen and bourgeois publicists, that the activities of the Communist International should be completely divorced from the Soviet Union.

It would seem rather incongruous to drive a wedge between the only Communist state and the Communist International. The only logical justification of such a step would be that the Soviet Government is in effect counter-revolutionary, and not even the most venomous Trotskyists support such a view. Russia, after all, is the foreign Communist's best argument. He can point to it as proof of the proposition that a nation may exist and register progress without the aid of the capitalist class. Indeed, as time goes on Western Communists will perhaps take still greater pride in the achievements of the Soviet Union, for though the Trotskyists never tire of quoting Lenin to the effect that socialism cannot be built in one country, the Stalinites can with equal

correctness quote Lenin to the effect that socialism can be built in one country. Lenin said both. And when Russia is a happy, prosperous socialistic republic, the international Communist movement will be endlessly exhilarated and aided by the fact.

Meanwhile, however, Russia's economy is not completely socialistic, nor is her entire population happy and prosperous. At the same time, international Communism languishes under the influence of Hitler's victory and its own sluggish advance. These truths invite the deduction that the process of making the world safe for the proletariat

will be longer than the Red zealots had originally hoped or planned. In Europe, radical leaders are reconciled to the postponement, and look forward to a period of slow preparation, education, organization. They point out that the Russian Bolshevik movement too suffered several severe setbacks during its fourteen-year march to power. One cannot say that Europe's Communists are disheartened. They are slowly collecting themselves after the shock of Hitlerism. But they see now that the world revolution is not as accessible a goal as the easy victory of the Russian Bolsheviks had led them to think.

take his complaint seriously. If it be said that, nevertheless, Portugal exists, that it has a glorious past, that its citizens have distinguished themselves in many fields, that their failure to be like Englishmen is no justification for a pogrom—the answer is: certainly, so long as they stay in Portugal. The moment, however, that they insist upon bringing Portugal into England, the English have a perfect right to regard them as aliens. The English will then act according to the state of their mental development. The lower types, as always, will see in mob violence the only retort to what is strange and objectionable. Nobody, however intellectual, will go very far in advocating the right of the Portuguese to be as alien as possible while declaring their loyalty to Britain.

When periodical waves of anti-Semitism break over Central Europe this is the problem, never frankly stated, which has to be solved. Most Gentiles are as completely unaware of the tenets of Judaism, orthodox or reformed, as they are of Zoroastrianism or Confucianism. It is understood (more or less as a vaudeville joke) that Jews do not eat pork. Few non-Jews actually know the Jewish dietary laws, with their charming implication that Gentiles eat offal. Most of the Jews with whom Gentiles come in contact do not obey the dietary laws; few, in fact, display any signs of Judaism, save in intonation, mannerism, and perhaps physical appearance. When the world protests against the mistreatment of Jews, does it envisage the Judaistic Fundamentalist? I doubt it. Other forms of obscurantism, it is true, do not provoke the same barbaric reprisals. But, on the whole, the masses of more or less rational men and women cannot be moved to make an intellectual protest on behalf of obscurantism. That gesture is left to the devotees of the particular cult: to be settled as between one fanatic and another.

In a recent article by a pro-Hitlerite Irishman of Catholic birth this situation is stated in propagandist form. He refers to the persecution of his Church in republican Spain and in Mexico, and asks how many mass meetings and boycotts have been instituted by the Jews in protest against this intolerance. His vaulting ambition o'erleaping itself, he even goes so far as to state, contrary to all the facts, that the Jews have never betrayed the faintest indignation when

As a Gentile Sees It

By Ernest Boyd

Two distinguished American writers of Jewish birth epitomize the problem which the Hitlerite excesses have once more thrust upon the attention of the world. Mr. Robert Nathan has set forth the point of view of the Jew whose racial self-consciousness is neither more nor less than that of any other race. Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn has expressed a degree of contradictory racial self-consciousness which perfectly explains, and almost justifies, the mediæval attitude of the anti-Semite. Mr. Nathan, though aware that he is a Jew, has no feeling for Judaism. Mr. Lewisohn holds that a Jew without Judaism is not a Jew, or does not deserve to be called such. One point of view is that of enlightened rationalism, the other is that of hysterical Fundamentalism.

As usual in such clashes of opinion, the extremes meet. Mr. Lewisohn taunts the assimilated German Jews with the fact that they are no more accepted as Germans than are their orthodox brethren. Adolf Hitler declares that a Jew, whatever his religious and racial loyalties, remains a Jew and an alien. In terms of logic Herr Hitler has the best of it, since he remains true to his premise that a Jew can no more change his nationality than the leopard can change

his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin. Mr. Lewisohn finds himself in the dilemma of arguing (1) that the Jews should never allow themselves to be assimilated and (2) that many of the greatest German artists, writers, musicians, and scientists have been Jews. Herr Hitler might retort: great Jewish artists, writers, and so forth, but never German.

Here we come to the essence of the Jewish question, the point where Judaistic Fundamentalist and anti-Semite meet. The former recommend and champion the very elements of Jewishness which confirm the hates and suspicions of the latter. If, as their Fundamentalists claim, the Jews ought to uphold and cherish every racial, religious, and linguistic difference which marks them off from the Gentile world, then they need hardly be surprised if the Gentile world is alienated. If a Portuguese of pronouncedly Catholic views, who considered Protestantism a vile superstition, who scrupulously insisted upon observing all fasts and holy days, and who, further, felt that Camoens was superior to Shakespeare, Racine, and Goethe—if such a Portuguese then wondered why, despite his long residence in England, the English did not regard him as one of themselves, nobody would

other races, such as the Irish in Ireland and the Negroes in America, have been victimized. The one grain of truth in this line of reasoning resides in the fact that, as I have said, when zealot meets zealot, then comes the pogrom. In other words, as deep calls to deep, so does obscurantism to obscurantism. However, as there are varieties of religious experience, so there are varieties of obscurantism and some are more familiar than others, the more familiar being those that arouse the least amount of mob violence. The time when Catholicism and Protestantism aroused their devotees to acts of intolerant violence has—more or less—passed, although reciprocal prejudice still sways both parties to the debate. While we are familiar with the rival claims of these two sects, the world in general is not familiar with Judaism. Its attitude toward the Jews is accordingly mediæval.

Hence, on the one hand, persecution and, on the other, sympathy—the only possible attitudes toward the alien and unfamiliar. When western nations protest against the oppression of Catholics or Protestants, they are presumed to know (approximately) the facts of the case. When they protest against the oppression of Jews, they are at a disadvantage. Are they advocating Judaistic Fundamentalism? Then, why not the Catholic or Protestant variety? If, as is usually the case, they are advocating fair play for people of diverse achievements, characteristics, and potentialities, without any thought of their religious beliefs, then it surely behooves these champions of freedom to draw some sharp distinctions. If Jew discriminates against Jew, on social, religious, and racial grounds, why should the Gentile refrain from like discrimination? It is well known that Sephardic Jews are no more inclined to like Ashkenazim than English conservatives to like Sinn Feiners. German Jews look coldly on *Ostjuden*, that is, Polish and Russian Jews, while the latter, in turn, have little respect for their Galician co-religionists.

On the other hand, while the Gentile world draws no such generic distinction, it does, in practice, distinguish between types and classes of Jews, as it is natural in any community. It is at this point that Jews, contrary to their own logic, imagine themselves to be a

homogeneous race, devoid of class, racial, or individual characteristics. Hence the familiar phenomenon of the indignation of civilized acceptable Jews because uncivilized and unacceptable Jews are not admitted and welcomed where they are not wanted. Other people are aware of the interesting fact that all members of a given family, all citizens of a given country are not necessarily equal or similar. A Bernard Shaw does not feel insulted because certain types of ignorant Irish are not popular, and suffer accordingly. The Jewish theory seems to be that no Jew is impossible, especially if the person to whom he seems impossible happens to be a Gentile. To such an extent has this preposterous claim been pushed that, when ill-feeling against the Jews takes a violent form, the Gentiles feel bound to protest, without pausing to inquire: what kind of Jews are being hurt and what is their point of view.

Anti-Semitism is essentially the out-growth of nationalistic and religious self-consciousness. When these elements are not present, it takes only the relatively mild form of any group of people excluding or admitting any other person on snobbish or other purely social and practical grounds. In its serious manifestations anti-Semitism is the application to the Jews of precisely the worst features of their own theories. The "Chosen People" is assuredly no less ridiculous and impudent a denial of anthropological facts than is the "Aryanism" of the Nordic blonde Christian anti-Semite. In so far as the Jews are held together by Judaism, they invite the very reprisals against which they protest. The orthodox, unassimilated Jew is the living exemplar of the most nationalistic racially self-conscious people in history. By what right does he appeal to those who lack such self-righteous prejudices, to protect him from those who have a similar conception of their own destiny?

Whatever else it may have not yet done, Soviet Russia has accomplished at least one thing: it has taken the wind out of the sails of potential religious martyrs. While maintaining its indubitable right, like other governments, to put forward on every occasion the official point of view, the Soviet Government allows any religion to function whose adherents will pay taxes on the

buildings employed and defray the costs of the religious teaching. This tactic has given the Chosen People a new grievance. In proportion to their numbers, the Jews in Soviet Russia have a majority of the opportunities available. Anti-Semitism is a punishable crime. Territory has been offered to those Jews who desire to live apart and found a Jewish Soviet Republic of their own. So far from placating the Jews, especially those outside Russia, this treatment has aroused indignation. Its tendency is to make Russian Jewish citizens who accept the existing régime indistinguishable from other Russians who accept it. It is almost suggested that the dear old Romanoffs had a finer appreciation of the Jewish soul. The knout and the Cossack's sabre were a great help to racial pride.

It is an evident fact that, in so far as they desire to become part of the nation in which they have settled, the Jews face only the same difficulties as other people. Countries as religiously and racially self-conscious as they—countries with the same inferiority complex—countries as devoted to the same forms of obscurantism—are, and always have been, anti-Semitic. The Jews have flourished best when unassisted by the promptings of rabbis on the one hand, and when unmolested by race-fanatics, on the other. It seems to be the doom of certain races to allow themselves to be manœuvred into this dilemma. The trick of attaching the fortunes of a race to a religion is an old one. For centuries it has worked with the Irish and the Jews. But the refusal to be caught in that dilemma is no denial of one's racial identity—or even of one's religious antecedents. John Galsworthy, whatever his theology, was as Protestant an Englishman as the agnostic Anatole France was the product of Catholic France. The Jew who was Viceroy of India was as definitely an Englishman as his predecessor, Lord Curzon, but there may well have been in him something that came from his remote racial past. It is only when that remote something is made an excuse for anti-Semitic discrimination that intelligent Gentiles should protest. Otherwise, there can be no more rejoicing over one Judaistic Fundamentalist than over ninety and nine specimens of the fifty-seven other varieties of religious and racial obscurantism.

FALL PLOWING

By Edgar Lee Masters

FROM Chicago eastward on the Limited
 Through Indiana, across Ohio clear
 To Pittsburgh one may see the plowing sped
 While autumn days are sunny, over sere
 Woodlands and shocks, where winds are sothing
 Around the steps of farmers plowing.

And as the day ends, and the sun descending
 Flames up the west with fire as he sets
 Amid sea-blues and greens, and forest rims are blending
 From brown to black, from the window of the car
 One sees the plowmen, tractors, teams
 Use the last light, which makes them silhouettes,
 Until the coming of the evening star
 When the fields are wrapped in dreams.

The morning comes, and Pittsburgh has been passed.
 The rolling slopes of Pennsylvania glide,
 And curve and coil, as faster now we ride,
 Around the windows of the car, which cast
 The landscape like a film into a heap.
 And in the buffet car the stock reports
 Are hung anew, the stock exchange
 Has opened in New York for longs and shorts,
 But travelling brokers find the market strange,
 And as they stare the cypher sheets and read
 The train is hailed by plowmen on the slopes
 Driving the plow,
 And casting for the Spring's renewal seed
 To crop with ever living hopes.

After the Limited leaves Elizabeth
 There are no plowmen. Soon the sea-marsh smell
 Drifts in from wastes of rushes, where the breath
 Of the hidden sea defies the city's spell.
 And soon, beyond the palisades, appear
 The towers of broker, lawyer, buccaneer,
 Where men make adding machines,
 And print and buy and sell.

I have known travellers to say
 After this journey, that amid the scenes,
 And crowds around the Empire Building, they
 Kept like a sun-blot in their memory yet
 A plowman against the fading light of day,
 A black and haunting silhouette.



AS I LIKE IT

William Lyon Phelps

Foggy London, Sunny France, and Other Weather Notes . . . Anthony Not Quite Adverse . . . Gorgeous Thrillers . . . Communication to W. L. P. from Department of Justice.

Few subjects are more interesting for general conversation than the weather; only and exclusively as a subject for discussion can the English climate be called either dependable or heated. During the early summer of 1933, the London journals went into their annual flurry. Professor Carlton F. Wells, of the University of Michigan, who has been researching in England, writes me:

Apropos of recent references to English climate in "As I Like It," this winter has been unusually decent, and undeniably sunnier—by statistical records—than most English winters. But I heartily sympathize, even so, with your curt, unhesitating comment on the weather over here. Incidentally, since *The Telegraph* editorial appeared, frequent and heavy showers have been the rule—and lightning killed two Londoners to boot.

Mr. Wells enclosed two articles, an essay called "The English Climate" in *The New Statesman and Nation* for June 10, and an editorial in *The London Daily Telegraph* for June 17.

Mr. Harry Roberts, in the former, praises the variability of the English climate; he believes that in general a temperate and variable climate produces more admirable human beings than climates more extreme or more constant. He pardonably assumes the superior excellence of the British people, and is interested only in discovering the cause of such virtue.

There is no other country where the changes in the weather figure so largely in everyday conversation; and this is no mere idle fashion, for every day here is a climatic adventure. The weather forecast is perhaps the most eagerly scanned passage in the newspapers, and it receives, probably, the most anxious attention from wireless listeners. The diversity of our climate is marked, not only as from one day to another, but as from place to

place. For although the total area is so relatively small—no place in the British Isles being more than about eighty miles from the sea—atmospheric conditions vary even at the same moment out of all proportion to differences in latitude or longitude. Thus, for example, while the average rainfall in Cumberland amounts to about 129 inches a year, in parts of Essex it is only 19 inches. So with the average hours of sunshine, which on the South Coast are over five daily—taking the year through—in the Midland counties under four, and in Manchester under three.

The editorial in *The Telegraph*, ten days later, which does not allude to Mr. Roberts's article, is called

LONDON'S LEGENDARY WEATHER

Nothing dies harder than legend. When a representative of *The Daily Telegraph* set forth yesterday to ask some of the delegates to the World Conference how London struck them, he found that one of the dominant emotions was an artless surprise that the sun was visible. . . . So now we have our legend; and that legend will persist, no matter how industriously our instruments register sunshine.

I think the statement that most astonishes Americans in London newspapers is the daily announcement HOURS OF SUNSHINE YESTERDAY. We take sunshine for granted. As Bishop Blougram said the difference between Christians and agnostics was that the former lived a life of faith diversified by doubt and the latter a life of doubt diversified by faith, so the difference between the Americans and the British is that the former have sunshine diversified by clouds and the latter have clouds diversified by sun. The difference in temperament between the British and Americans is largely owing to climate.

An English gentleman, who was graduated many years ago at Oxford, told me that he now lives six months of

every year in England and the rest of the time in the United States. I was naturally interested in discovering which six he selected for America. He said he always spent the summers in America, because he was sure of having a summer, whereas in England the summer was often omitted.

And an additional curse is that it is not always easy to enjoy an English warmed interior on a freezing, breezing, sleety summer day. The houses are run on the method of the father of Eugénie Grandet, who lit the fire on a certain date in the calendar and extinguished it at another annual date.

England has the most beautiful and most charming countryside that I have ever seen; but its climate is in general detestable. Two statements may be truthfully added. The climate of London is no worse than that of Paris or Berlin; and it is unfair that foggy England should be compared to sunny France. Did you ever spend an autumn and winter in Paris? And even the south of France, the *côte d'azur*, is now by many foreigners preferred as a summer resort. Those who imagine its winter is like that of Georgia or Arizona are in for a rude awakening.

The other statement is that in general the best intellectual work of the world has been done in bad climates.

As to whether people are happier in temperate and variable climates than they are in those of steadier or more extreme temperatures, I could not say. Mr. Robert Marshall, who spent fifteen months in a part of Alaska north of the Arctic Circle, where there is no sun in December and no night in June and July, regards it as a kind of Paradise.

The people (he says) are the happiest he has ever seen. They are free and independent.

Mr. Roberts, who loves the English climate for its inconstancy, says: "A monotony of cold or of damp, of sunshine or dryness, is invariably depressing to the spirit and to the physiological activity of man." Possibly; but a monotony of sunshine is not so depressing as a monotony of cold and damp; even as a monotony of health and prosperity is not so depressing as a monotony of sickness and poverty. The summers I spent in California were to me glorious and inspiring because of the perpetual sunshine; it was like perpetual vigor.

Shakespeare seems to have suffered acutely from the English climate. The approach of autumn and winter filled him with foreboding; the brevity of summer was like the brevity of joy; the rough winds of May shook the tender leaves of hope as they shook the darling buds. And the inconstancy of the weather, so admired by Mr. Roberts, did not seem to the poet a cause for gratification when he was caught in the rain.

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?

It is more than three centuries from William Shakespeare to P. G. Wodehouse, but apparently no change has taken place in the climate. In his latest admirable novel, appropriately called "Heavy Weather," Mr. Wodehouse says, "Considering what a pleasing rarity sunshine in London is, one might have expected," etc. Northern France fares little better from her creative writers. François Coppée spoke of the "rare smiles" of the Norman weather, and Anatole France, describing one of his heroines, said, "Her eyes were grey; the grey of the Paris sky."

"The Soft Spot," by A. S. M. Hutchinson, is certainly his best novel since "If Winter Comes," and I am not afraid to say I have a towering admiration for that book, not only for its main thesis, but for such characters as High Jinks, Low Jinks, and others. The scenes of the present novel are in England and in South America; but the real interest is in the analysis of the

character of the one dominating person—he cannot be called a hero. The Headmaster of the public school made a diagnosis which subsequent years and adventures merely confirmed. To say that the book discloses a man struggling with his conscience would be unfair; for the struggle is more subtle than that. As a story it is to be commended for its continual interest; it holds one's attention from beginning to end. And yet it is not the story which is important; the incidents are secondary. What is most impressive is the revelation of *une âme damnée*; for the author believes that individuals have souls.

If novelists, like the heathen, were to be heard for their much speaking, we should have to award the year's prize to "Anthony Adverse," by Hervey Allen, a novel which fills more than 1200 large, closely printed pages, containing 500,000 words. Whatever one may think of the merits of the book as literature, I salute the publishers, who have succeeded in getting all this into one really attractive volume, easy for the eyes and hands. I wonder what those masters of concision—Thornton Wilder and Zona Gale—think of this Leviathan. Mere length is of course not necessarily a virtue or a blemish. "Clarissa" in eight volumes is not too long as is shown by the fact that every attempt at condensation is a failure; "Jean Christophe" in ten volumes, "War and Peace," 1536 pages, "Les Trois Mousquetaires" with its sequel "Vingt Ans Après," about 2000 pages, are not too long. "Anthony Adverse" is too long, for the promise given by the admirable opening chapter is not maintained either in plot or in style; and the last



part, adventures in America, is positively bad. Two grave faults—apart from excessive verbiage—mar the work; a pretentiousness which is meant to be profound and is really often overwriting; and (something by no means peculiar to Mr. Allen) a determination to equal the Deity in the respect that from him no secrets are hid. He wishes to tell the reader that in every relation between men and women there is no

detail with which he is not completely familiar.

There are of course many interesting characters, and many fine passages. I think the best part of the book is where Captain Elisha Adonijah Jorham appears, pages 312 to 315. And the most humorous—a masterpiece of humor—passage is the exploit of the Captain with the lizard on page 340. This is worthy of Mark Twain at his best.

It is with joy I welcome a new and illustrated edition of one of the most original novels ever written—"The Casting Away of Mrs. Leeks and Mrs. Aleshine," by the ever-living Frank Stockton. This story is literally incomparable, as nothing else resembles it. Its humor and characterization are both inimitable. In this charming new edition of the novel—which was first published in 1886—there are forty delightful illustrations by George Richards.

As a rule, I do not care for volumes of short stories; when I receive one, I lay it down as if it burned the fingers. Yet Edna Ferber's "They Brought Their Women" contains such fine specimens of the art that I read the volume with keen interest. I especially commend to all and sundry the tale "Keep it Holy."

Archibald Marshall has produced a steadily entertaining literary autobiography called "Out and About," which deals exclusively with his adventures as a journalist in England, France, and Australia. It is full of good anecdotes of Lord Northcliffe, Henry James, Belloc, Gosse, Conrad, Chesterton, Ford Madox Hueffer, and many others. Every one will like this book except Ford Madox Ford. Not the least interesting pages are those that deal with the author's experiences as an undergraduate at Cambridge, when he began his journalistic career. There are a number of portrait illustrations.

An exceedingly good biography of Moses Coit Tyler has given me particular pleasure, for I knew Tyler and had some gracious letters from him. He died in 1900. He was a Yale graduate, a friend of Andrew D. White, a member of the faculty of the University of Michigan and then of Cornell, a successful teacher and inspiring public lecturer; but for none of these reasons does he deserve a biography. This he merits

because of his pioneer work in Colonial literature. "A History of American Literature (1607-1765)" became a standard work on the day of its publication. The story of Tyler's life was the subject of a dissertation by Thomas Edgar Cassady, who died before he was able to revise it for publication. Thus the author of this biography, Professor Howard Mumford Jones, of the University of Michigan, although giving full credit to Mr. Cassady for his researches, was forced to write the book himself. It is well done, with abundant notes, a bibliography, and an index.

I wonder how many of my readers are familiar with "Thirty Tales and Sketches" by R. B. Cunningham Graham, published a few years ago. The pieces are chosen by Edward Garnett, and I believe they will be a revelation to those who take them up for the first time. It is not necessary to say that their author, now over eighty, is one of the most interesting men alive. I shall always remember a good talk I had with him last year in London. (A letter appeared in *The London Times Literary Supplement* recently saying the conversation with him given with detail in Arnold Bennett's "Journal" never happened.) Well, these stories and sketches are beautiful specimens of literary art.

"Shakespeare and Hawaii" sounds like the title of a work by Joe Cook, but it really consists of informal lectures delivered in Honolulu at the University of Hawaii in March, 1933, by Christopher Morley. They are soliloquies, filled with wit and penetration, and I am glad he printed them.

"Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland" is a fine volume that would have been read with avidity by the late Francis J. Child; and indeed, his famous successor, Professor George Lyman Kittredge, has aided in editing the texts and supplying valuable information. They were collected by Elisabeth Bristol Greenleaf (I had almost written Greensleeves), and the music was recorded in the field by Grace Yarrow Mansfield and the editor. (It will be remembered that Doctor Mary Smyth has collected many original ballads in Maine.) Work of this kind is immensely valuable, for it means the preservation of lyrical literature and music that would otherwise disappear forever. This volume is the result of the Vassar College Folk-Lore Expedition to New-

foundland in 1929, financed by the President and Trustees. The Introduction (illustrated) is highly interesting, and we see that this work really had its origin—where so many good works have begun—in the Grenfell Mission. The ballads and songs number 185, and



with many of them the music is given. Whether tragic or comic, they are certainly entertaining.

A practical book for the autumn is "The Control of Football Injuries" by Doctor Marvin A. Stevens and Doctor Winthrop M. Phelps (no relation, alas!) This is a work of over 200 pages, abundantly illustrated, and dealing in detail with every kind of injury, giving diagnosis and treatment, from scratches to fractures of the skull. Doctor Stevens has been Head Coach at Yale, and Doctor Phelps is Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, and chief of his department in the New Haven hospital. I shall never forget the day when I was called on the telephone.

Is this Doctor Phelps?

Yes.

What are your office hours?

I don't have any on Sunday.

Well, can't I see you?

Yes, if it is important, what's the matter?

I want you to look at my girl's leg.

Well, I shall be glad to see your girl's leg, but don't you think you had better see a physician?

Who the hell are you?

A genuine thriller is "The Forbidden Room," an English murder story by Russell Thorndike. It opens with horror and closes with excitement. Apart from the needless extra-improbability of the last chapter, I should advise the author, when he quotes Milton, to quote him with some approach to accuracy. On page 134 is the following alleged citation from "Paradise Lost":

Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong from the ethereal sky
To direful ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition.

If my friend Burton Rascoe read Milton in such a version, his coldness to the poet could be easily understood.

The two mystery books that have thus far appeared in this year from Mr.

Oppenheim differ greatly in value. "Murder at Monte Carlo" is, as was to be expected, thrilling; "Jeremiah and the Princess," is, as was not to be expected, dull. There is only one contemporary who can succeed with the Zenda style; and that is Dornford Yates.

"First Round Murder," by John V. Turner, is highly exciting. I was surprised to find "The Pearl Clasp," by Francis Beeding, so uninteresting, for his previous stories were hair-raisers.

"The Shakespeare Murders," by Neil Gordon, is a gorgeous thriller. Although its scenes take place in a fine English country seat, a Chicago gunman operates as successfully as at home. There is only one person who can cope with him. This is a spoofy book, and one of the best combinations of mirth and murder I have read, since the latest appearance of the incomparable Bulldog Drummond.

One of the reasons for the strength of A. E. Housman's prose is that it is as concrete as his verse. He can make textual criticism vivid. Mr. Clarence Stratton, Instructor in English in the Cleveland High Schools, in an interesting letter to *The Saturday Review of Literature*, gives the following citation from Professor Housman's address before the British Classical Association in 1921, the shrewd title of which is "The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism." Here is the passage, for which my readers will share my gratitude to Mr. Stratton.

A textual critic engaged upon his business is not at all like Newton investigating the motions of the planets; he is much more like a dog hunting for fleas. If a dog hunted for fleas on mathematical principles, basing his researches on statistics of area and population, he would never catch a flea except by accident. They require to be treated as individuals; and every problem which presents itself to the textual critic must be regarded as possibly unique.

In Paris, *Le Temps* made the following comments on the death of John Galsworthy and on his work:

John Galsworthy est mort ce matin à 9 h.

15. La littérature anglaise perd en lui l'un de ses romanciers et de ses dramaturges les plus éminents et les plus humains, auquel le prix Nobel avait été justement décerné l'an dernier. Il représentait les lettres anglaises contemporaines dans leur manifestation la plus complète, allant le plus directement au cœur des masses. C'était un créateur de la grande ligue des Dickens et des Thackeray.

Ce contemporain de Wells, de Conrad, de

Kipling, d'Arnold Bennett a été le peintre brillant, avisé, ému de la société anglaise d'avant-guerre, héritière de grandes traditions, fondue dans un moule rigide et qui s'est lentement modifiée sous l'influence des passions longtemps comprimées.

Comme l'a dit M. Louis Gillet, "la mystique humaine et nationale (qui anime son œuvre) explique la popularité de l'auteur et de son roman; on y trouve l'histoire à un moment de l'Angleterre et le crépuscule d'une classe, avec la foi dans le pays qui a rendu immortel le grand livre de Daniel de Foë. De là la situation unique de M. Galsworthy: il se trouve avoir écrit un ouvrage qui est pour tout Anglais un livre de famille."

Autant George Moore, qui l'a précédé d'une semaine dans la tombe, est resté éloigné de ses lecteurs, autant John Galsworthy avait conquis leur gratitude, leur admiration et leur affection. . . .

John Galsworthy n'a pas eu une moindre gloire comme dramaturge. Il fut le premier auteur anglais à donner à ses dialogues le naturel de la vie—ce qui nuit à la lecture de la pièce—rompant en cela avec le style conventionnel en usage. Choisissant ses sujets parmi les problèmes sociaux, un peu à la manière de Brieux, il a profondément remué le public non seulement anglais, mais de tous les pays où ses pièces, traduites, ont été représentées.

On peut citer: *la Boîte d'argent* (1906), *Joie* (1907), *Querelle* (1909), *Justice* (1910), *The Pigeon* (1912), *le Fils aîné* (1912), *Jouer sa peau* (1920), *Loyauté* (1922), *la Forêt* (1924), *Evasion* (1926). Parmi ces pièces qui toutes courront d'éclatants succès, aussi bien en Angleterre qu'à l'étranger, on peut donner une place éminente à un drame comme *Loyauté* où l'auteur prend parti contre les préjugés de castes et de races, en mettant en scène un riche israélite qui accule au suicide un jeune officier, cerveau brûlé qui s'est rendu coupable d'un vol; *Evasion* où Galsworthy montre un innocent condamné aux travaux forcés et se constituant prisonnier après son évasion pour ne pas contraindre un prêtre au parjure.

Le choix de tels sujets indique suffisamment les tendances de cet écrivain toujours prêt à combattre pour les opprimés avec une intense générosité.

In Sydney, Australia, there is the only State Conservatorium of Music in the British Empire. The following letter from the Registrar seems to me of general interest.

Observing your reference to Brahms and Wagner in the April issue of SCRIBNER'S, it occurred to me that you might be interested in the part taken by this Institution in these world-wide commemorations. I am therefore enclosing copies of our Festival programs. This is the only State Conservatorium in the British Empire and the programs will perhaps give some indication of our resources.

Yours faithfully,
FREDERICK HUTCHINS,
Registrar.

The programs for Wagner and Brahms are elaborate, both instrumental and vocal; with full orchestra, piano concertos, vocal solos, ladies' choir, string quartet. On March 15 the Wagner program, and on April 12 and May 24 the two Brahms concerts, all under

the guidance of Doctor W. Arundel Orchard, Director. I congratulate the people of New South Wales not only on their State Conservatorium, but on the high grade of excellence maintained; and it is pleasant to know that the Registrar is a faithful reader of this department.

The little church at Bemerton, near Salisbury, England, had in June a week's celebration in honor of its rector, George Herbert, who officiated there from 1630 to 1633, when he died and was buried under the altar. His famous book of poems "The Temple" was published immediately after his death, so that this year is the tercentenary of his death and of the famous book. In this tiny church for three years the saintly George Herbert held services twice a day, as described in Izaak Walton's charming biography. Many people of the parish crowded into the building, and some of the farmers "let their plough rest when Mr. Herbert's saintsbell rung to prayers, that they might also offer their devotions to God with him."

Most Americans who visit England go to see the cathedral at Salisbury; let me urge them also to enter this little church so near the big one; it seems as if the spirit of Herbert still dwelt there. My colleague, Professor Tucker Brooke, writes me on a post card showing a picture of the Bemerton church:

You know this view very well. I was in the church today, and also at Wilton, which the Earl of Pembroke has thrown open, inside and out, to visitors for five days. . . . The grounds and gardens at Wilton are beautiful at this season beyond description.

When I received a letter and saw on the outside of the envelope

Department of Justice, Washington, D. C.

I was afraid to open it. However, I thought it best to know the truth; and after all, the letter did contain an indictment, to which I plead guilty. It is signed by George A. H. Fraser; and although I have already acknowledged in this column some other letters that called attention to my blunder (since I recognized neither the original nor Leigh Hunt's translation), Mr. Fraser is interesting in his comments and increases the value of them by additional lines omitted in the version sent to me.

I think Scribnerians had better see his epistle.

Horace was vexed to find Homer nodding (*Ars Poet.* 358), but, with three thousand years' accumulation of things to know since Homer's day, the oversights of the eminent now arouse more sympathy than dissatisfaction. We who are both insignificant and fallible are encouraged complacently to hum Lady Nairn's song:

"O, we're a' noddin', nid, nid, noddin'
O, we're a' noddin' at oor hoose at hame."

In your department of the July SCRIBNER'S you insert a letter from a Pennsylvania Judge quoting the Latin verses beginning: "Mihi est propositum in taberna mori," with an English translation, both apparently attributed to Professor Nevin of Franklin & Marshall College. But the Latin poem is a famous mediæval drinking-song, written about 1163 A.D., and usually credited to Walter Map, or de Mapes, canon of Lincoln, prebend of St. Paul's, Clerk of the Household of Henry II, etc. (Calvin S. Brown's "Latin Songs, Classical, Mediæval and Modern," 1914). The juicy and zestful translation was produced in 1819 by the versatile Leigh Hunt (Milford's ed. 1923).

Incidentally, in the translation as quoted, the sixth stanza and half the fifth are omitted, which is a pity. These verses run:

"Just as liquor floweth free floweth forth my
lay so,
But I must moreover eat, or I could not say so;
Nought it availeth inwardly should I write all
day so,
But with God's grace after meat I beat Ovidius
Naso.

"Neither is there given me prophetic animation;
Unless when I have eat and drank, yea e'en
to saturation;
Then in my upper story hath Bacchus domina-
tion
And Phœbus rusheth into me and beggareth
relation."

It is not only since 1929 that stock-owners have found their holdings diminishing in value. In *Life* for July 25, 1907, appeared the following verse:

I remember, I remember
The house where I was shorn;
The hallowed place where little lambs
Come peeping in at morn;
The playful bears, and friendly bulls
Who wisely counseled me,
And where I bought at 88—
And sold at 23.

Mr. Cyril Clemens, author of the biography of Josh Billings noticed in these pages, is now at work on the life of Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby (David Ross Locke, 1833-1888) in memory of the centenary of his birth. If any Scribnerians have memories or information about this Lincolnian companion, they are asked to write to Mr. Clemens at Webster Groves, Missouri.

NEW BOOKS MENTIONED WITH THEIR PUBLISHERS

The asterisk means that the book is suitable for discussion in literary clubs.

- *"The Soft Spot," by A. S. M. Hutchinson. Little Brown. \$2.50.
- *"Anthony Adverse," by Hervey Allen. Far-
rar and Rinehart. \$3.
- *"Out and About," by Archibald Marshall. London: Murray. 10s. 6d.
- *"The Life of Moses Coit Tyler," by H. M. Jones. Univ. of Mich. \$3.
- *"Thirty Tales and Sketches," by Cunningham-Graham. Viking. \$3.
- *"Shakespeare and Hawaii," by C. Morley. Doubleday Doran. \$1.25.
- *"Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland," by Greenleaf and Mansfield. Harvard. \$5.
- *"The Control of Football Injuries," by Stevens and Phelps. Barnes. \$3.
- *"The Forbidden Room," by R. Thorndike. Dial. \$2.
- *"Murder at Monte Carlo," by Oppenheim. Little Brown. \$2.
- *"Jeremiah and the Princess," by Oppenheim. Little Brown. \$2.
- *"First Round Murder," by J. V. Turner. Holt. \$2.
- *"The Pearl Clasp," by F. Beeding. Little Brown. \$2.
- *"The Shakespeare Murders," by Neil Gordon. Holt. \$2.
- *"Heavy Weather," by P. G. Wodehouse. Little Brown. \$2.
- *"The Casting Away of Mrs. Leeks and Mrs. Aleshine," by Stockton. New ed., illus-
trated. Appleton-Century. \$2.50.
- *"They Brought Their Women," by Edna Fer-
ber. Doubleday Doran. \$2.50.

THE "GREAT" FRENCHMAN

Continued from page 213

simply, more than she could bear. So she immediately set about influencing the Sultan in the other direction. She did this by secret agencies and her action delayed the completion of the Canal by about seven years.

Lord Palmerston was the prime mover in this curious performance. He was a blustering, cantankerous, perverse, and stubborn man and his vision, never very large, was further limited in this case by a violent francophobia. To Palmerston, nothing a Frenchman could do could have any good in it.

For five years the fight went on before a spadeful of earth could be dug. British agents were constantly at Constantinople to keep the Sultan from ratifying Lesseps' concession. Lesseps made what he called a "*tour de propagande*" in England and, by his magnetic presence and the obvious merit of his plan, won an immense body of popular opinion including the shipping interests to his side. Unfortunately Palmerston had the leading newspapers—especially the powerful *Times*—behind him.

It was 1859 before the first "blow of the pick" was possible. For the first five years of actual work on the canal there was interference from England. It was supposed that even the bandits and other trouble-makers along the line of the Canal were in the pay of the British Government. The threats from Constantinople and the ultimatum in 1863 that unless certain new conditions were adhered to the work would be stopped by force, were certainly of British origin. Yet when, ten years after its begining, the Canal was finally opened, the English were the first to praise it

and Lesseps was nowhere a greater hero than in England.

VIII

When work began in the Isthmus of Suez, Ferdinand de Lesseps was no longer a young man in years. He was fifty-four. Yet looking back now on his life and at the colossal enterprise he undertook twenty years later, he seems, at fifty-four, almost a boy with life scarcely begun. He was at this age robust, vigorous, exuberant in health. His long, arduous trips in the desert, his life in the engineering camps, his constant movement, his long hours of concentrated study, his voyages to England and to Turkey, his immense correspondence: all these things seemed to add to his strength.

When he formed the company to finance Suez, he was approached by bankers, syndicates, and financiers who saw the chance of great profit in taking over the management of the enterprise. Lesseps would not listen to them. He replied to all offers of assistance with the same statement:

"When I was a boy," he said, "my father's friend Mehemet-Ali said to me, 'Remember, my young friend, that if, in the course of your life, you have something very important to do, it is on yourself alone that you must count. If you take a partner, there will be one too many.'"

This advice was the cause of his success at Suez and his downfall at Panama. At fifty-four he was capable of acting alone; past seventy he still held his faith in that power but the power itself was gone.

We must now picture to ourselves this vigorous man, incredibly young at sixty-four when the Canal was inaugurated, overnight, so to speak, a world hero. For the world never recognizes an achievement until with a blare of trumpets the final evidence is shown them. The inauguration of Suez was a magnificent celebration.

It was a gay festival. It continued for days and nights. There were fêtes, receptions, dinners, speeches. The short, erect, robust, white-haired man responding with fine oratory to the toasts was not unaware of the drama. He was not without proper pride in his triumph. He was not sorry that he had chosen to act alone. He felt a sense of vindication, that, after the rebuff by his own government, the derision of England, the treachery of Turkey, he had come back undaunted and arrived at last at a pinnacle of success which, of its kind, was almost unprecedented in recorded history.

There was no unjustified vanity in his manner. He was not, as he has often been painted, a comic-opera hero. But he was, in every detail, the perfect hero for his time. As we in our time worship the youth, the simplicity, the shyness and the inarticulate nobility of a Lindbergh, so these Victorians worshipped the suavity, the urbanity, the smartness, the normal pride, and the capacity to respond in well-turned phrases to public acclaim of a middle-aged Count de Lesseps.

In the years that followed, he was dined, wined, and feted all over Europe. In England especially, the people, ashamed now of the behavior of their

government, gave him a welcome such as never before or since has been shown a foreigner. Victoria presented him with the Grand Order of the Star of India. The Lord Mayor of London gave him the freedom of the city. It would be remarkable if a man even of his balance could have passed through this without his head being turned. The astonishing thing is that in these ten years it was turned so little.

Digging a canal between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea accounts readily enough for the adulation of princes, diplomats, generals, captains of industry, poets, Academy members, and professors of science. But what is a Suez Canal to the rabble in a Paris street? What do they know of the pharaohs, of Magellan, of the lure of the Indies, of Bonaparte's engineers, of the diplomacy of the Porte, of obstructionist British politics, or discrepancies in tides? Yet when Ferdinand de Lesseps went walking in Paris, the *gamins* ran ahead to look at his face, bedraggled women crawled out of gutters to kiss the hem of his coat, and drunken rioters who had never seen or heard or thought beyond their little *arrondissement*, drew back to make way for his carriage and stood at a swaying attention with their caps in their hands.

Renan gave the answer in his quoted phrase, "*Miserior super turbas*"—I have looked with sympathy upon the masses. He smiled on the people of Paris exactly as he had once smiled on the plague-stricken Alexandrians in the midst of a mutiny, as he had smiled from the back of his stallion upon the Arabs. The people of Paris saw his smile and knew at once that he was their friend.

The same smile led them, in later years, to downfall. Yet even when the worst had happened, when the peasants and the street people who had poured out their last sous at his feet saw that their money had mysteriously disappeared, still, in his presence, they worshipped, staring at him with wide, perplexed eyes, incredulous that he had deceived them and, at the end, throwing the blame on others.

IX

We must pass abruptly from the gay scenes of celebration to a different and sinister setting. The ancient isthmus of Darien was hardly a convivial back-

ground. It had not greatly changed since the days of Balboa and Cortez. The sick sweat still rose from the land, the jungle, teeming with wild and poisonous life, still offered its hard resistance, the Chagres River still flooded with the rains and periodically carried away what works of man lay in its path, men fled from and were caught by a mysterious, invisible affair called the "miasma" and the *culex fasciatus* or *stegomyia* was still regarded as a harmless mosquito. It was no place to celebrate anything and if, in a stray moment of enthusiasm, you drank a toast to Ferdinand de Lesseps, you did it with the probability in your mind that a week later you would be consigned without ceremony to your grave.

In 1850, an American company, headed by Colonel Totten, had built a railway. It had used Chinese labor and the story ran in the Isthmus that the Panama Railroad cost one Chinaman per tie. It had, nevertheless, been a highly profitable venture, carrying cargoes from ships at Aspinwall to ships at Panama. It had certainly been a fine feat of engineering and human endurance under tormenting conditions and it was also an evidence that, in spite of floods, jungles, and fevers, the works of civilization were not impossible.

In 1875 a "Geographic Congress" was held in Paris with Ferdinand de Lesseps in the chair. The project of Panama came up; there was loud acclaim with all eyes turned toward the hero of Suez. The Congress decided that ways and means should be found to explore the available routes.

The two gentlemen picked to investigate Panama were Lieutenant Lucien Napoleon Bonaparte Wyse and his brother-in-law General Türr.

X

At this point there enters the shadow of a man whose sinister influence was largely responsible for the later scandal. Yet the Baron de Reinach is not, truly, the villain of the piece for, when all the dirty linen was at last washed before the public, he was found to be merely a marionette with the real villain invisible behind the scenes, manipulating his wires.

Reinach was called in now to form the company which should finance Wyse and Türr. There was at that time

nothing dubious about his reputation. He was a private banker of Jewish extraction, conservative and universally respected. He enters our story at this point and soon withdraws to be replaced, temporarily, by another Jewish banker, Lévy-Crémeaux; he will return again in 1883, from which time he never lost his leech-like grip on the enterprise of Panama.

Conditions in French finance had changed since the Suez days. Loans, bond issues, stock issues were costly affairs. Syndicates were necessary for large transactions and these syndicates demanded big percentages. Part of the money paid for this purpose was often used, also, to control a highly corrupt press and to gild the palms of various "men of influence." The man of mystery to whom we will come shortly was one of these.

The new company was short-lived. In 1876 Wyse and Türr made what afterward turned out to be a hasty survey and in 1878 bought from the republic of Colombia for ten million francs the concession for a canal. The concession was to last ninety-nine years from the completion of the canal. It could be resold to any commercial company but not to a government.

A new Congress was called in Paris. It represented many nations, and many celebrated engineers and other experts were invited. It was to examine carefully all possible routes and to estimate the cost of operations and future profits.

Ferdinand de Lesseps, the grand old man of France, seventy-four years old, the father of a large family, ripe for retirement from active life and the enjoyment of an honored old age, took this new venture almost as a matter of course. His son Charles demurred. Charles was in his fifties; in many ways an older man than his father and in all ways more cautious. There was nothing swashbuckling about Charles. He begged his father to leave the project alone.

"What," he asked, "do you seek in Panama? Money? You will take as little interest in that as you did at Suez. Glory? You have had so much of that that you can afford to leave some of it to others. . . . To better the lot of your fellow beings? You have paid to the full that debt; you have a right, now, to repose. . . .

"Your enterprises are unique in the

sense that they depend entirely on your credit. . . . You succeeded by a miracle at Suez; is not one miracle enough in the course of one life without insisting on a second one? However, if you wish me to be with you in this, I shall go in good humor; I will not complain whatever happens. All that I am I owe to you. . . ."

Ferdinand never hesitated.

"If a general has won one battle," he said, "must he retreat before the next?"

Later, he said: "Only the creator of Suez can build Panama."

The Congress reviewed the routes. It voted for Panama. The meeting was managed, opponents say, with a steam roller. It is true that some of the delegates were absent for the vote and that many others, notably the Americans, abstained from voting.

XI

The press, reporting this decision, was sceptical. The climate of Panama, some of the papers said, was intolerable. The floods were dangerous. Also, they said, which was true, the surveys had been inadequate. They did not add (which was also true) that any survey of the Chagres valley would be inadequate and that, as one engineer has repeatedly remarked, the only way to discover the difficulties of the Panama Canal was to dig it. The papers also said that there was violent opposition in the United States to a canal not built by Americans.

Lesseps was not daunted by those comments. He started his own paper, the famous *Bulletin du Canal Inter-oceanique*. He announced that he would investigate these objections in person. "I will go to Panama," he said. "I will take my family and we will see what this climate does to us. I will tour America, see about this opposition, and raise money."

Tour de propagande! He had reason to count on this method. He organized his company, asked for 400 million francs and made his first *tour* in the provinces of France to collect it.

At this moment, when the bond issue was trying to float, Monsieur Lévy-Crémeux arrived on the scene with a gentle explanation of French finance.

"You are children," he said to the Lesseps. "You cannot do things that way nowadays. Look for instance at

the influence of the *Banque nationale*, look at M. Emile de Girardin and M. Bibiat with their papers *La France* and *Le Petit Journal*; unless you are in with that group you cannot succeed. It will cost you 800,000 francs to get this money."

Ferdinand and Charles stoutly refused.

"We raised the money for Suez," they said, proudly, and Lévy-Crémeux withdrew, smiling.

The issue failed. Only thirty millions was raised and this had to be given back to the subscribers. The contractors for the Canal began to complain. "Do you expect us," they said, "to do our preliminary work at our own expense?" M. Lévy-Crémeux called again. "My father," says Charles in his later testimony, "with his generous nature was not hard to convince." What else, indeed, was there for him to do? The proof stood before him. Thus the first ugly figure was written on the books of the Panama Company but it stands now not as an accusation against the Lesseps but against the whole corrupt system of the day.

Ferdinand embarked then for America. This voyage into the unknown in his seventy-fifth year did not alarm him. He went gallantly and gaily with little Tototte running by his side, with his young wife, with others of his children. There were also M. Couvreux the contractor who had done large things in Europe, a famous Dutch engineer, and several other experts.

There was a celebration to welcome them at Colon. It must have been a pleasant diversion for the Panamanians. Flags and banners enlivened the dreary streets; there were banquets and toasts in champagne. The weather was good, the mosquitoes were harmless—they work best on men fatigued by toil which the Panamanians wisely avoided. The dry season was just beginning.

XII

The cost of the Canal had been estimated by the technical commission of the Paris Congress at 843 million francs. By some strange feat of calculation on the ground, Lesseps and his contractors reduced this estimate to 512 million francs or \$102,400,000. He left Panama in triumph, having proved to his own satisfaction that the climate was healthy,

and made a tour through the United States to find out what truth there was in the rumors of opposition.

Before he left, work had begun on the Canal. There is a picturesque legend about the first blow of the pick supposed to have been given by Lesseps' daughter Ferdinand (Tototte), then seven years old. Tototte (now the Comtesse de Miramon) indignantly denies this and brands the whole story as a myth, which very likely it is. But the tale runs that Lesseps and the ceremonial party arrived late by steamer at the spot designated and found that the tides had covered it. Lesseps, not in the least fazed by this, ordered a box of sand to be brought on deck and Tototte delivered the "coup de pioche" there after which toasts were drunk and the prepared speeches made! But whether or not this is fictional, Lesseps' own bulletin reports the ceremony (without mention of the tides) and gives Tototte due credit.

One other important transaction was arranged while he was on the Isthmus. It had been decided that the Canal should follow the line of the railway, first because that was the best place for it; second because the railway would be convenient.

On the ground he saw immediately that the railway people would offer opposition rather than aid. Whether they dropped broad hints to this effect or Lesseps and his advisors merely deduced it, made no difference in the result. Lesseps decided that it would be necessary to buy the control of the railroads. Panama Railroad stock was selling then on the New York Stock Exchange at \$90 a share; they cost Lesseps \$250 a share in Panama, showing that the railroad company was not primarily interested in the progress of civilization. Lesseps' tour of the United States met with the usual enthusiasm. He and Tototte made the trip together, Tototte having refused to be separated from her father. She tells amusingly of this scene when she clung to him in the station with tears streaming, unwilling at this last moment to let him go. It was like him to give in to her. He could not often resist his children.

Everywhere Ferdinand met with the same ovations, receptions, and dinners. Speeches were made hailing the hero of Suez, oratory and champagne flowed abundantly but no money. Perhaps

there was merely a normal scepticism; perhaps, too, Americans felt that Americans, not Frenchmen, should dig an American canal. So Lesseps returned to France with empty pockets but convinced that the moral support of the United States was solid behind him.

In the meantime the new issue, guided by the careful Lévy-Crémiere, had been oversubscribed. It had been expensive, but the money was there and it was immediately useful as about 35 million dollars had already been spent for the concession, the surveys, and the stock of the Panama Railroad.

XIII

The Panama narrative must be divided into two parts: Panama and Paris. They are simultaneous and interdependent. In Panama there was the work on the Canal, complicated by grafting contractors, the difficult Colombian laws, the greedy Colombian Government, but most of all by the unexpected and unforeseeable technical difficulties: the ravages of the yellow fever and the too-blind faith of the aged promoter. In Paris there was the problem of finance with, on one hand, the indomitable and tragic loyalty of the French people, and on the other, the pack of wolves which grew daily and snatched greedily. The graft in Paris, feeding on this noble enterprise, reached such proportions at last that no one, no matter how high or respectable his position, was free of suspicion. There came eventually, as we shall see, a veritable reign of terror.

The work on the Isthmus moved slowly. It would be impossible here to go into all the troubles: the rock below the surface where no rock was expected, the landslides which delayed even the United States Army working on a thoroughly explored section, the hopeless inefficiency of the contract system. Yet the enthusiasm, at the beginning, was tremendous.

It is easy to put down the first extravagance of the company to corruption. But the ancient Darien was at best no happy abode. It was a forbidding place. In such a place unless some of the home comforts are imported, is courage possible at all? Nor can we entirely condemn the company for making every effort to provide luxuries for men who were doomed from their first landing; or even for making a grandiose

display before a world which must otherwise look sceptically upon the whole undertaking. Much of the extravagance on the Isthmus was whistling to keep up spirits.

Yet the figures are startling. \$102,000 for the house known as "*La Folie Dingler*," a frame house for the first unhappy manager, \$42,000 for a private Pullman car for the same gentleman to travel about in. (He got little enjoyment from these things, to be sure; he left the Isthmus soon enough, broken in health, having lost his wife, his daughter, his daughter's fiancé—victims of the "miasma.") \$600,000 for horses and carriages; \$2,000,000 for servants—these figures cover the perquisites of all the managers.

At Colon, entering this paradise, new shiploads of brave men kept arriving. They turned their eyes away from the unpromising land. The funerals passed them as they sought out their quarters. The cemeteries with fresh-turned earth surrounded them.

"Ships were anchored," says Philippe Bunau-Varilla (one of the surviving engineers) ". . . without a single soul on board. All the crew had died." Fear, says Bunau-Varilla, was a prejudicial cause. "Many a time I went to see the ships as they arrived from Europe filled with employees. . . . Some bore on their faces the obvious marks of terror. I often took note of their names to see how they would stand the trial. Without exception, they were dead within three months, if they had not fled from the Isthmus.

"For every eighty employees who survived six months on the Isthmus, one could say that twenty died."

These figures are conservative—M. Bunau-Varilla was intensely loyal to the enterprise.

So, in scenes like this, the work went on. The yellow fever had, as we have since discovered, peculiar attributes. It does not spread widely among men who take their ease. The lazy Panamanians had not greatly suffered—perhaps they were partly immune. But foreign laborers sweating hours a day under a hot sun are extremely vulnerable. So Panama, inhabited by its own restful people, had the look of a comparatively healthy place. Peopled by thousands of hard workers, it became a foul sink of disease. Secondly, the doctors of the time thought that the fever was borne by an

invisible mist or miasma; that it was communicated through clothing or contact or filth. So we may read violent accusations of unsanitary conditions and praise of the hospitals whose beds were set in saucers of water to keep off the miasma and not be greatly impressed by either, knowing now that the female mosquitoes did all the damage and that these insects bred by millions in the very saucers the beds were set in!

The first necessary change in the work was to replace European labor with Jamaican Negroes who were immune to the fever. The second step was to take the control out of the hands of the contractors. This was done by a system known as the Régie. When the Régie was instituted, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, then a boy in his twenties, found himself in entire charge, all his superiors having died!

Soon after he undertook the work, it became evident to this brilliant young engineer that the dream of Lesseps, a sea-level canal, could never be realized with the time and money available. The range of the Cordilleras—especially Snake Hill or Culebra—presented an insuperable problem of digging. You must make a lock canal, he said. A lock canal could be completed in the estimated time; then after it was opened it could be dredged, gradually, to sea level, using the tolls from the canal for this purpose.

And now appears the most significant psychological element in the tragedy—the too blind faith of a proud old man. "Am I," said Ferdinand de Lesseps, "I, the hero of Suez, who forced a sea-level canal there against the advice of my engineers, I who have been honored by the world for my persistence—am I, now, to be influenced by these narrow-minded technicians?"

He was a man, remember, who had always had his way. He had never been thwarted. For many years, he had been surrounded only by men who felt a religious reverence for him; no word but praise had reached his ears. And he was now nearly eighty years old.

He would not hear of the proposed change. The engineers, the directors, even his son Charles, eventually, pleaded with him. When at last he conceded, it was too late. Meantime, the enterprise in Panama, with its aura of suffering and disease, moved on inevitably to its disaster.

It would be surprising if, with the constant flow back to France of sick and disgruntled men, no rumors of the troubles in Panama got abroad in Paris. They did. The most extravagant stories were told. The company was throwing money right and left, encouraging waste, ignoring disease and vice. Millions of francs' worth of machinery were bought only to be thrown away the next day. Barrels of supplies were allowed to rot. The whole Isthmus had been turned by the company into a hell of filth and iniquity. Men were deliberately starved, whipped, and tortured. And so on . . .

The wolves grabbed eagerly at these scraps. First the newspaper men, then the bankers, then the politicians. It will be more and more expensive from now on, said the financiers, to raise the loans! See how the Panama stock jumps up and down on the Bourse!

Re-enter at this juncture (Lévy-Crémeux having died) the gentle but harassed Baron de Reinach. "We cannot afford," he said, "to have influential men against us."

The Baron had not yet lost an iota of his respectability. He was rich, conservative, with no shadow upon his reputation. No one who had an affair of any importance on his hands would dream of disregarding his advice. Consequently, when Lévy-Crémeux ceased to function he was the obvious successor and the finances of the Panama Company were confidently turned over to him.

Reinach was quiet in his demands but he was insatiable. There may have been a bottom even to the sea-level canal but there seemed to be none to the pit of the financiers. Publicity, for instance, cost more to fight the evil reports. Men of influence—one or two in particular, Reinach hinted . . . well, one, especially—must not be antagonized.

It was in 1885 that the ghost behind Reinach first became visible. Cornelius Herz was a Commander of the Legion of Honor. He was also a genius in the arts of intrigue and blackmail and his operations were so occult that not until after the final crash was any suspicion cast on him.

No one has ever explained the hold Herz had on the Baron de Reinach. There are various stories about it still current in Paris. One is that Herz once used subtle influences to get Reinach's

son into the military academy; that forever after he threatened to expose these means unless Reinach paid him to keep quiet. This is improbable, first because Herz was a Jew himself; secondly because how could he defame the young Reinach without exposing himself? Yet the threat was there, whatever it was, and it contributed as much as any other factor to the failure of the Panama Company in France.

Every sou that Reinach collected over and above expenses went into the pockets of Cornelius Herz. And Herz was more and more insistent. It may seem odd to us who read today of all these transactions that the Lesseps did not refuse Reinach in spite of his representations, in spite of his plausibility. The money, after all, belonged to a lot of poor investors; represented, often, the savings of a lifetime.

But until their death the Lesseps stoutly declared that it was to save these investors that they spent the money. In other words, they were in so deep that the only hope was to get in deeper. They were in the position of gamblers who must keep on gambling or lose everything. Charles believed that he was fighting a brave and desperate fight.

In 1885, money was difficult to get. The costs had far exceeded the largest estimates. Some of the stockholders were uneasy, yet a new loan must be floated shortly.

The lottery bond issue is still a popular means of raising money in France. To each bond sold a lottery ticket is attached and prizes are awarded to the lucky. The law requires that only enterprises of national importance may be supported in this way and a special act of parliament is necessary for each issue.

In 1885, Ferdinand de Lesseps approached the government on this subject. There was not the immediate response he expected. The ministers demanded that an expert be sent to the Isthmus to report on the condition of the works. So Armand Rousseau, an engineer of the soundest judgment and an impeccable reputation, was despatched to Panama.

At this point the ghost, Cornelius Herz, not satisfied with the indirect contributions of Reinach, appeared in the flesh before the worried Charles de Lesseps, with the insignia of Commander of the Legion of Honor conspicuous in his buttonhole.

XIV

The strange past of this gentleman was not known in Paris. It was not even known that his parents were Frankfort Jews, citizens of the United States, that he himself was a naturalized American, that he had practised medicine in Chicago and San Francisco, that he had changed his profession to dabble in electricity, that his was the master hand in a series of shady deals involving the telephone service of France and the arc-lamp industry, that he was engaged now in bleeding his supposed friend Jacques Reinach to death.

All Paris knew of him was that he was the intimate of influential newspaper owners and many deputies and senators, that he enjoyed the confidence of Georges Clemenceau, then head of the radical party and proprietor of the journal *La Justice*, that he was often seen at the Elysée Palace chatting affably with the President of the Republic.

"When he entered your house," says Charles in his defence before the court, "you wanted him to leave it your friend, not your enemy."

In 1885, he entered Charles de Lesseps' house with a strange demand of 600,000 francs (\$120,000), and a threatening aspect.

"If you don't believe in my influence," he said, "come with me some day to visit the President at his country place."

It was too late in the game, Charles thought, and the situation was too delicate, now that government aid was required, to ignore such an invitation. He went with M. Herz to Mont-sous-Vaudrey. For three days they were royally entertained by Jules Grévy—accepted, Charles says, as members of the family and the first installment of the 600,000 francs was transferred in negotiable paper to the American Jew.

In his trial, the prosecutor asked Charles why he did not cause the arrest of a man who boasted of such an influence. Charles shrugged—as well he might; his bitter smile was reflected in the faces of the spectators. It was a period in France when the hold of such men as Herz not only on fair enterprises like Panama but on the government as well was a strangle hold. We know now that Herz was a traitor to both sides; that he did not use his power to help the enterprises which he bled and that such a payment as Charles made would

lead, merely, to more and more bleeding. Charles did not know this. He only knew that Herz's influence was essential and he was willing to do anything to save his father and his shareholders from collapse. And such transactions were the custom of the times. If Panama had succeeded, no doubt he would have been praised by the investors themselves for such a use of their money!

XV

Under the indomitable persistence of Philippe Bunau-Varilla, the digging was going well when Armand Rousseau, the government's expert, arrived. The hospitals were packed, the cemeteries were growing day by day but the cut in Culebra was deep and a part of the Canal was already navigable.

Rousseau was a meticulous and conservative engineer. He was, like Bunau-Varilla, a product of the hard *École des Ponts et Chaussées*. Yet when he saw the works, he was surprised. He had believed, perhaps, the ugly rumors. He congratulated Bunau-Varilla in his quiet way and nodded cheerfully as he went from one encampment to another along the line of the Canal. But he was quick to see the essence of the difficulty.

"With more money and a little more time," he said, "the Canal can be completed. But it must be a lock canal."

He prepared a careful report and returned to France. Bunau-Varilla was immensely cheered. He saw, now, the end in sight. All along the canal, the work picked up, the directors and the engineers were heartened; even the lazy Jamaica Negroes stuck more closely to their jobs.

But Bunau-Varilla did not take into consideration his host. Or, rather, he counted upon him too much. With the facts now so plain, the report of a famous expert making more money available, the obstinacy of the *Grand Français* would soon be broken down. He did not realize that this obstinacy was the product, truly, of a second childhood. To take the sea-level canal away from Ferdinand at this point would be like taking from a child a toy he had just begun to enjoy.

And just at this moment, something occurred in Paris to help Ferdinand's persistence. He was elected to the Academy, the dearest dream of all great

Frenchmen. He was asked to occupy the vacancy left by the famous Thiers. Renan's speech was the crowning glory.

At this pinnacle of triumph, then, the quiet Rousseau could make no impression on him. "The Canal will be dug to sea-level," he said. "I won the victory over my engineers at Suez . . ."

The decision put the Canal on the next to the last lap of its lost race.

XVI

In the meantime in Paris the first crime of the "*affaire de Panama*" was committed. It was in the nature of a hold-up and it was perpetrated by a member of the cabinet.

"It was like giving your money or your watch," said Charles on the stand, "to some one who, in a dark corner of the woods, holds a knife at your throat."

"With this difference," replied the prosecutor. "That in the Panama business everything went on in broad daylight whereas in the example you give, you could call the police."

Charles might, indeed, have called the police to arrest the minister Baihaut.

Baihaut, the Minister of Public Works, did not, however, appear in person to ask for a million francs for "necessary expenses" in giving his approval to the lottery-bond act. He sent M. Blondin, an employee of the impeccable Crédit Lyonnais, as his emissary.

"The minister's vote," said Blondin, "is essential to the success of your enterprise."

It was. Charles knew that. Even if Ferdinand should give his consent to a lock canal, Baihaut's vote would be essential. At that time, however, the Lesseps had not yet seen Rousseau's report which was at the moment in Baihaut's hands.

"The minister," Blondin added, "is hesitant. The hesitation of the minister will be determined by the payment to him of a million francs. The sum is needed for certain expenses having a political character."

"This vulgar disguise," writes Bunau-Varilla, "could not conceal the obvious distortion. M. Charles de Lesseps had to defend the savings of several hundred thousands of French families. Their preservation depended on the attitude of the Minister. . . . What decision was incumbent on M. de Lesseps under the

circumstances? Was it his duty to give publicity to this and thereby create a gigantic scandal which would rob them, for the future, of the essential support of the government? He would have thus established his own personal integrity, but at the expense of those who had trusted him. . . .

"Of the two alternatives, M. Charles de Lesseps generously selected the one which demanded his own personal sacrifice . . ."

He paid, however, only the first instalment—375,000 francs.

For this consideration, the minister of public works gave his careful attention to the Panama Canal. The report of the expert, Rousseau, was in his safe, having been confided to him according to regulations by the engineer. He was afraid the public might regard it as unfavorable and that if it was published, pressure would be brought upon him to decide against the lottery bonds.

Unfortunately for Baihaut, an enterprising reporter on *Le Temps* unearthed a copy. *Le Temps* was then owned by a powerful gentleman named Hébrard whose activities were not confined to journalism. By an odd coincidence, Hébrard was at the moment in earnest conference with a steel-worker, M. Eiffel, who knew all about canal locks. *Le Temps* published the report in full with questions as to why it had been so long suppressed, and shortly after its publication, Eiffel received the contract for the locks of Panama and took M. Hébrard into partnership.

XVII

So, in the end, the grand old man capitulated. He did not give in; he merely compromised. "We have decided," he announced, "on a *provisional* lock canal." Let no one think he had abandoned his original project! But unforeseen difficulties were delaying the opening of the sea-level canal. So, in order to expedite it, locks would be used as a temporary measure; once the canal was opened to navigation the money from the tolls would pour in and the stockholders would realize on their investment, but the digging would not stop. It would continue by underwater dredging; one by one the locks would be done away with and the dream of a sea-level canal would come true.

The news of this decision was re-

ceived in Paris with cynical looks but on the Isthmus it was hailed with rejoicing. A new régime was instituted; the monthly "cube" doubled. The engineers went at the work with a spirit they had not shown since the beginning. The dismal landscape began to take on beauty. The fever was forgotten. Toasts were drunk to the opening, men prayed to live to see it.

M. Eiffel was given *carte blanche* and he used it to the full, spending a good bit of money on a deal which the courts in France later investigated—from which even his grand iron tower in Paris could not entirely divert attention. But the happy folk in Panama did not know about this. They only knew that efficient work was being done, that their long dream was coming into a beautiful reality.

So they continued until the winter of 1888. Then, as that vigorous year drew to its close; as Christmas came on full of hope; and after long, sad rains, the dry season was beginning again, suddenly the men were asked to lay down their picks and let the fires go out in their engines.

It must have been a tragic word to those who had been brave enough to last through. For the first time they were reluctant to turn their eyes toward home. The echo of the proud words, "The canal will be built!" had hardly died on the air; how they must have strained their ears then to hear it again!

In Paris the law had been passed. The issue of lottery bonds had been floated and it had failed. The *Grand Français*, then in his eighty-fourth year, had girded up his loins for the last time; he had made a final *tour de propagande* in the provinces; the old cheers had followed him, children had still run to look at his face, but the money had stayed in the stockings.

A receiver was appointed for the company. Steps were taken to organize anew. The favorable press ran editorials crying out against the shame of abandoning the enterprise. Bunau-Varilla hurried home to publish books on how easy it would be to revive it. A new company was formed. But the public had learned its lesson.

Yet for two years, no outcry was raised against the Lesseps. The stockholders took their losses philosophically; many still had hope. Pathetic letters came in to the receiver full of implicit

faith in the aged Ferdinand; there were offers of small sums from groups of factory-workers. "*Les Masses*" simply could not believe in the débâcle.

XVIII

The scandal, or, as it is called in France, "*l'affaire de Panama*" broke with the mysterious death of the Baron de Reinach. One day in apparent good health, the next he was found by his valet dead in his bed.

The family physician pronounced it heart failure. The press hailed this explanation with derision.

Several independent journalists had been making secret investigations. They had found out many things about Reinach and his relations with the Panama Company; they had run across startling trails leading from Reinach to the Chamber of Deputies. Reinach's sudden death gave them a fortuitous opening.

The government in a fright placed a seal on Reinach's effects. They forbade the exhumation of his body which had been hurriedly buried. They insisted upon the acceptance of the family physician's death certificate.

Throughout Paris there was an outcry. Newsboys could not get enough papers to sell the public greedy for this juicy scandal. In response to the general clamor, the Chamber, after frantic sessions during which dignified deputies shook their fists at each other and delivered the most extravagant accusations, the government resigned, the unhappy baron's body was dug up (without result), and the papers were turned over to a commission of inquiry.

Meanwhile the journalists, notably M. Drumont, a violent anti-semitic, continued their researches. They found, among other things, one of Reinach's cheque-books containing stubs on which appeared the names of dozens of deputies. By letters, memoranda, scraps of paper they traced the money apparently paid to these deputies back to the Panama Company. It was a fallacious bit of detective work but it scared the Chamber and delighted the public.

All this material was turned over at last to the commission of inquiry and for a year the investigation went on while a reign of terror accompanied it. No one was safe. The deputies opened their daily papers in dread of new accusations. The ministers trembled. A num-

ber of prominent persons disappeared, among them Cornelius Herz, who was later discovered in England, where, with the curious tendency of the English to discredit French opinion, he was well received.

The papers dug up the facts about Cornelius Herz and many fancies also. He had been a spy, they said: once for the Germans, once for the Italians against France. A conspiracy was partly unveiled engineered by German agents intended to weaken the foundations of the French Republic, but such discoveries are common in France. As in the Dreyfus case, there was, perhaps, a germ of truth in the rumor.

The go-between employed by Reinach in his supposed corruption of the deputies was found to be a highly disreputable character named Arton already under suspicion as a socialist dynamiter. When the scandal broke, Arton could not be found. Like Herz he had discovered that life was healthier in foreign lands.

Herz was vigorously expelled from the Legion of Honor. His former friends expressed their amazement in public but they trembled privately; Jules Grévy, Georges Clemenceau, Hébrard and others must have passed uncomfortable hours.

It would be futile here to try to follow the tortuous ways of this investigation. The facts as they were eventually untangled were simple. Reinach, hounded by Herz, tried at every step to disguise the huge payments he kept making to him. The only means he could find to clear his reputation was to put the blame on others. So he tried to pretend that the Panama Company had ordered him to bribe the parliament. The cheque stubs, the memoranda, the letters were all found to have been deliberately forged. Herz himself had discovered the forgeries and had threatened Reinach with exposure; Reinach, cornered at last, had taken one of the subtle poisons which for years he had carried in his pocket.

In Parliament, the affair resolved itself into a political battle between parties, the only common ground being a black damnation of the Panama Company, root and branch.

No one remembered now the idealism with which the enterprise had been launched. No one remembered the hero-worship of Ferdinand as, at seventy-

four, he had taken this fearless step into the unknown. No one thought about the courage of the young engineers who had sacrificed their lives in the jungle. No one was interested in the deep cut that lay, deserted, between the oceans or the quantity of good machines that the vines were beginning to cover.

The end of the commission's inquiry was the arrest of some ten persons including Charles de Lesseps and the grand old man of France.

"This scoundrel," wrote Drumont in his book *La Dernière Bataille*, "walks about as a triumphant hero. . . . The consecration of Ferdinand de Lesseps as a great Frenchman is a joke . . . an antiphase in reality."

The hero was eighty-seven years old. He was no longer "walking about." He was, in fact, confined to his bed; he lived through long days of coma. His powers had failed at last. The vigor that had carried him hundreds of miles on foot and on horseback over Suez and Panama was gone for good.

Yet when the magistrate sent for him, he got up from his bed, dressed in his best clothes, put on his cordon of the Legion of Honor, defended himself proudly for three quarters of an hour before the magistrate and came home alone. The next day he said to his family:

"I had a horrible dream last night. I dreamed that the magistrate sent for me to appear before him. Me!"

It was his last proud word.

Charles went cheerfully to jail. The court, finding that the old man could not be moved, relented to the extent of not confining him, agreed that he be not required to appear at his trial; the charge, however, was not removed.

After a defense as fine as anything in modern judiciary annals, the court pronounced its verdict. Ferdinand and Charles were sentenced to two years in prison. Three months later, the *Cour de Cassation* reversed the verdict on the ground that the statute of limitations put the "real crimes" of the affair beyond the reach of Justice. There being no bail in France, Charles had already served a term in prison and was broken in health. Baihaut was condemned to five years and served his term.

The last days of Ferdinand de Lesseps were mercifully obscured. He had retired to La Chesnaye, the country place

where he had worked out the project of Suez. He was able, after a time, to walk a little in the garden. But, like so many old men, he had lost the memory of recent events. The scandal in Paris was kept from him. He spent his time in the house languidly turning over the pages of old magazines, speaking occasionally of great moments of the past.

When, in his ninetieth year, he died so quietly that only a technical distinction lay between life and death, the press could not be restrained from eulogy. It dwelt heavily upon Suez.

So passed the hero, the "immortal," the *Grand Français*, the swindler and the scoundrel. He was not revived in France. His work was justified not by the Government of France but, some ten years after his death, by the Government of the United States.

There was no champagne, no oratory, no small girl wielding a silver pick in the early morning when the Americans began their work on the Panama Canal. The United States Army was not interested in picturesque ceremonies. They went about their business with drab, stern discipline and calm faces.

Systematically, the *stegomyia* was eliminated, following the researches of Walter Reed in Cuba. Strict sanitation was applied along the line, the most modern machinery was brought into use. There were no palaces, no private cars, no wine, no gambling dens; no one ate, drank, or made merry with any sinister thought about tomorrow.

But then, the uncertain work had been done. General Goethals and his assistants knew precisely where the rock lay and the soft earth. They knew where the locks must go. They knew that contractors could not do the work. They knew that crafty financiers (of which there were many in those days in America) could not be trusted with the funds.

The United States paid forty million dollars to the New Panama Canal Company of France for machinery, material, and the shares of the Panama Railroad.

But what of the years between? What of the ten years between the death of Ferdinand de Lesseps and the commencement of the American canal?

Philippe Bunau-Varilla, now in his seventies and still active as an engineer, gladly explains the eight years he spent in America justifying what he calls "*le génie français*."

During these years, the feasibility of the Nicaragua route was constantly discussed. With Bunau-Varilla it was a matter of patriotism that the French trace be followed by the United States. He spent months "lobbying" in Washington. He talked continuously about the volcanic activities in Nicaragua. Once when he was asked to produce an official document proving that there was such a danger along the Nicaraguan route, he found a Colombian postage stamp bearing an engraving made from a photograph of an active volcano in close proximity to the railroad line the government was hoping to follow. He bought ninety of these stamps, sent one to each senator with a news clipping attached telling the story of a recent eruption of this very volcano. "If a stamp is not an official document," said he, "what is?" The Senate was amused and voted the Panama route.

When the revolution came in Panama and the United States sent marines to keep the Isthmus clear, he was there to make sure that the Panamanians won the fight. When they had won, they sent him as their minister to Washington so that there might be no delay in the American recognition of Panama.

Bunau-Varilla reminds one a little of the *Grand Français* himself. He has the same nobility of bearing, the same persistent belief in his ideals. Certainly when he talks, Ferdinand de Lesseps is vivid before you.

It is impossible to keep Lesseps in the front rank of world heroes. He made too many mistakes; he was ignorant of too many things; he was too unwilling to take advice and not amenable enough to compromise for complete practical success. In a sense his collapse in Panama was deserved. Yet he went into it in answer to popular acclaim, to blind worship; and many who called loudest upon him to undertake this work were the first to turn against him or grab at undue profits.

There is something appealing, especially to Americans, in a man blinded by an ideal and fighting for it stubbornly in the midst of such a pack of thieves as the scoundrels of the Panama *affaire*. In France such things are judged, rather, by results. So we may expect, as time goes on, that this bold romantic may come more definitely into his own in the continent that knew his failure than in the land of his triumph.

BEHIND THE SCENES

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

Foraker of Ohio
Mr. Flynn Replies

Those Who Eat
Southern Negroes

When the dog-eared manuscript of "Cracker Chidlings" was accepted by this magazine, it would have taken an extraordinary critic, and even soothsayer, to predict that its author would soon after write "Jacob's Ladder" and then *South Moon Under*. **Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings** has since told us that "Cracker Chidlings" was her swan song. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin and going through the various phases of life which come to a newspaper reporter, she decided that there was nothing in that life which could hold her any longer. Buying an orange grove at Cross Creek, Hawthorn, Route One, Florida, Mrs. Rawlings started writing stories of that section. They failed to find publication and she had decided that "Cracker Chidlings" would be her last attempt. What followed is literary history. Mrs. Rawlings spent the summer in England and is now back in Florida.

Paul Hutchinson is managing editor of *Christian Century* and lives in Chicago, but that is only part of his activity. For many years he travelled in China and Japan and has written extensively of the Orient. Last summer the mere announcement of the London Conference was enough to start him off. After attending sessions of the Conference, visiting with important delegates and seeing what was left of England, he proceeded on to Germany and examined that situation in detail. He is now back home, temporarily.

Mr. Hutchinson's article completes the cycle which was started with Christian Gauss's piece "Can We Live Alone?" in August, which presented the case for internationalism, and Stuart Chase's "Autarchy" in September, which showed that nationalism may be our definite policy of the future. According to Mr. Hutchinson, the London Conference showed that instead of nationalism or internationalism, we are to have five economic empires to which the world will belong.

Roger Burlingame comes naturally by his literary instincts, having been brought up in a literary atmosphere. His father, the late Edward Burlingame,

started the new SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE in January, 1887, and occupied the editor's chair until 1914. Roger Burlingame came to SCRIBNER's after leaving Harvard and left it only to continue his literary career. He is the author of several novels and of numerous short stories. He is now living in America.

David Cornel De Jong is another of fine writers of English to whom it came as a foreign tongue. He was born in Holland and was brought to this country by his parents, settling in the Middle West. He had one year at Duke University on a fellowship and later attended Brown University. Even before this his stories had begun to appear in the smaller literary magazines. His first novel will appear in the spring. He spent the summer at his old home in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Charles Edward Russell has been a fighter from his earliest days. He was one of the original "muckrakers" along with Lincoln Steffens and David Graham Phillips. As one of the most prominent Socialists, he waged that fight with Eugene Debs until the War smashed that party and divided its membership. Returning again to the career of author, Mr. Russell wrote the life of Theodore Thomas, which won the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1917. His autobiography *Bare Hands Only* appears this fall.

Evan Shipman is the son of the late Louis Evan Shipman, former editor of *Life* magazine and playwright. Mr. Shipman lived for many years in France, where he covered the races for the American newspapers of Paris. He is now back in this country, as enamoured of the track as ever.

Haniel Long tells so much about himself in the introduction to his poem on Stephen Foster that little is left to say, beyond the fact that after spending several summers in New Mexico, he decided that his future home could not possibly be elsewhere. He is now permanently settled in Santa Fé.

Ernest Boyd was a member of the distinguished Dublin group which contained James Joyce, A.E. (George Russell), William Butler Yeats, and John Butler Yeats. Since coming to this coun-

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BEHIND THE SCENES

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

try he has continued his work in criticism. He is out of sympathy with the present literary policy of the Irish Free State and has lately refused to accept membership in the Irish Academy.

Long before the Soviet Union became acceptable to the press of the world as a source of news, Louis Fischer was established there as a permanent correspondent. His tenure of stay is exceeded by few Americans and his analysis of the Russian scene is stamped with the authority of years of study.

FORAKER OF OHIO

Miss Lucy S. Stewart, of Evanston, Ill., has protested against references to the late Senator Joseph B. Foraker, of Ohio, in the life of "Mark Hanna," by John T. Flynn. We are publishing Miss Stewart's letter and Mr. Flynn's reply:

Sirs: In his article "Mark Hanna" in the August SCRIBNER John T. Flynn comments on the late Senator Joseph B. Foraker as follows:

"When he went to the Senate he became a loud, warlike, ready champion of every form of corporate activity. This he knew how to do with the corrupt demagog's sure mastery of all the language of adoration for the people's interest. . . . In 1908 when Taft was a candidate for the presidency, William Randolph Hearst revealed that all the time the haughty chauvinist senator was ranting about the starry banner and the boys in blue he was taking checks from John D. Archbold of the Standard Oil Company."

In his *Notes of a Busy Life*, Volume II, pages 329 to 355, Senator Foraker fully discusses the Hearst charges and gives irrefutable proof, which was published at the time, that they are false. I give some of his summaries, substantiated by evidence.

Concerning the Standard Oil employment he says: ". . . I made such explanation, by showing that my employment was confined to the affairs of the company in Ohio and its reorganization after the trust was dissolved by order of our Supreme Court, and that my employment had no relation in the slightest degree to anything in which the Federal Government was then interested, or with respect to which the Congress was then legislating, or at that time proposing to legislate, and that the employment was ended long before the company was made the subject of any special attention in Congress, and longer still before it was attacked in the Federal Courts or proceeded against in any way by the Federal Government; and further, that the employment was not to defend the company against charges of violation of the laws of Ohio or the United States, or the orders of any of the courts, but only to assist in so executing the orders of the courts and so reorganizing as to conform to all laws, State and National, and to fully comply with all the orders of the courts that had been made against it."

There was nothing that could be remotely construed as "corrupt," as Flynn alleges, in Foraker's connection with the Standard Oil Company.

(Continued on page 23)

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BEHIND THE SCENES

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

Continued

In this connection Foraker discusses the Elkins law, ending with: "I refer to it [the Elkins law] and speak of its general character only to show that this legislation, which I helped to frame and to enact, aimed directly at the Standard Oil Co. and the other great corporations is, or ought to be, convincing evidence that I was not employed by the company at that time, and that I was not influenced in the discharge of my public duties by reason of the employment that had ended long before."

He further says: "And what is true in this respect as to the Standard Oil Co. is also and equally true as to every other trust, corporation or person. Notwithstanding what the President [Theodore Roosevelt] says in answer to Mr. Bryan, of September 23, that I was the representative and champion and defender of corporations in the Senate, there is not a word of truth in any such statement, whether made by him or anybody else, and there is not a scrap of evidence that can be produced supporting any such charge that cannot be as fully and satisfactorily explained as has been explained the letter about the Jones bill and the proposed purchase of the *Ohio State Journal*."

Foraker also set forth the correspondence with Archbold in which, in May, 1906, he declined further employment with the Standard Oil Company.

As to Flynn's charge that Foraker was a chauvinist and "Ranted about the starry banner and the boys in blue"; young as he then was, Foraker was distinguished for bravery in the Civil War; it was not chauvinism to remain true to the principles of liberty and union for which he fought and to use his eloquence

in their defense throughout his life. After reading Foraker's book, Theodore Roosevelt wrote to him on June 28, 1916, in part as follows: "Not only do I admire your entire courage and straightforwardness (in the railway rate legislation I respected you a thousand times more than I did many of the men who voted for the bill) but I also grew steadily more and more to realize your absolute Americanism, and your capacity for generosity and disinterestedness. Besides, you knew the need that the freeman shall be able to fight, under penalty of daring to be a freeman."

What Flynn describes as "chauvinism" in Foraker Theodore Roosevelt characterizes as "absolute Americanism." Is it reprehensible to possess the quality of "absolute Americanism"?

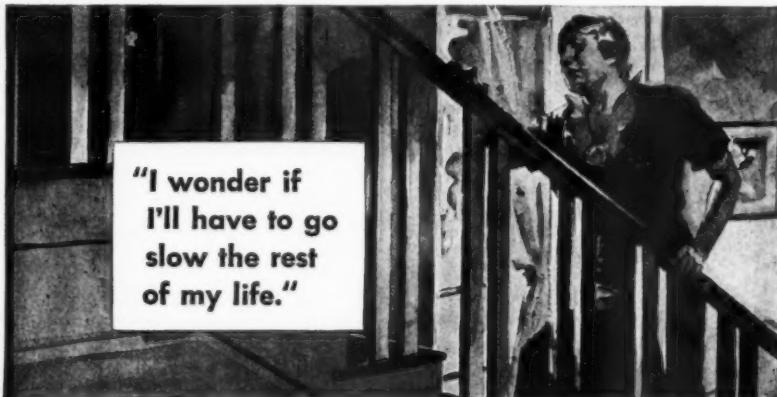
(Miss) LUCY S. STEWART.

2110 Orrington Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Mr. Flynn replies:

Sirs: Unhappily, pictures of those important figures who have only recently left the stage, if frankly drawn, often offend very excellent

persons who, perhaps, knew them personally and admired them. In Foraker's case, however, the evidence is too clear to leave room for doubt about his character. He was a man of great ability. He was a good lawyer, though most of his life was spent in politics rather than law. He was audacious, colorful, a formidable debater. But, like many another man, he chose to range himself on the side of those whose power was drawn from money. And while he acted as attorney for the Standard Oil Company when it was the subject of universal popular obloquy, he employed the stratagem which such men always use to capture and hold the people's favor—fortissimo on the patriotism stops. The Senator's defender thinks it mean to sneer at the flag-waving of the brave soldier who carried the message, not to Garcia, but to General Sherman at the Battle of Bentonville. But unhappily it does not follow that the brave soldier will always be an incorrigible citizen. It would be equally valid to censure those historians who have told the squalid tale of Arnold's treason because once that intrepid soldier had behaved with such valiance on the field of Saratoga. I do not mean to compare Foraker to Arnold. He was not that sort of



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**BEHIND THE SCENES**

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

Continued

traitor. But surely we have no need to be told that human nature is a mysterious mixture of hostile qualities and that good husbands, gentle fathers, generous friends can be the busiest grafters and that the courageous warrior can be found among the plunderers when war is over.

The indictment of Foraker needs no support save what is supplied from his own defense. He was a political leader in Ohio. He was ambitious for the Presidency. He was governor of the state. He went to the Senate in 1898 where he remained for a number of years. During that time the governments of both Ohio and the United States were in continual warfare with the Standard Oil Company. Its predatory

leaders defied the laws, corrupted legislators and public officials. What is more, in the Senate the whole question of dealing with the growing problem of the trusts was a continuous irritant. Ohio had a suit against Standard Oil for contempt for its failure to comply with the dissolution decree. The United States Senator from Ohio accepted employment from the Standard Oil Company at this time as its attorney, not to represent it in the courts, for he never made an appearance for it, but to assist in "their reorganization." Rockefeller had a host of distinguished lawyers. He did not need the legal talents of this part-time lawyer, who was a political boss in Ohio and a Senator in Washington. But Rockefeller employed him. The employment was secret. Foraker denied it when it was first publicly suggested. And they paid him—no one knows how much—but at least four certificates of deposit (a highly secret form of payment) amounting to \$44,500 in about eight months, while the United States was paying him only \$7,500 a year as a Senator. Of course, he collected a great deal more.

When he was first publicly exposed through the printing of the correspondence with John D. Archbold, he asserted he had never appeared for the Standard in relation to Federal legislation. Whereupon a letter was produced from Archbold which read: "I venture to write you a word regarding the bill introduced by Senator Jones of Arkansas . . . intended to amend the 'act to protect trade and commerce against unlawful restraints and monopolies.'" Then follows a request that he communicate with Archbold about it. There was a stream of letters about using his influence in the legislature of Ohio to kill similar bills there. And Frank S. Monnett, attorney-general of Ohio, declared that when he brought the contempt proceedings against the Standard Oil Company, Foraker went to him and threatened him, saying he would be driven out of Ohio politics if he persisted in the suit. And all during these periods there was a stream of certificates of deposit going from the vice-president of Standard Oil to the Senator in Washington.

This is not gossip or hearsay. The facts may be found read on the records in the testimony before the Clapp Committee in 1912, known as Campaign Contributions, United States Committee on Privileges and Elections, 62nd Congress, 3rd Session. It is an amazing thing to me that Foraker's own defense that he accepted employment from the Standard at that time should not be sufficient to damn him in the eyes of every honest man and woman.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

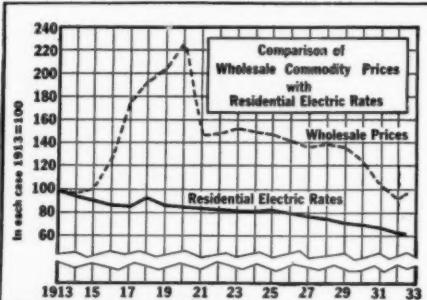
THOSE WHO EAT

Sirs: To many people these are very dark days and they wait eagerly for each article that will help clear up the situation in their minds. It seems that the days of free competition and rigid anti-trust laws are past. We are entering a modified form of planned economy. To the average man this means only what he sees happening today. Small dealers struggling to comply with NRA rules which, in some cases, seem almost impossible while prices are rising and the stores run August sales in which their advertising liberally threatens higher prices in September.

Certainly the articles by A. A. Berle Jr. and Stuart Chase were among the best of the month in explaining to the common man what is happening. No answer, however, has yet been given to that question which I hear in stores, on the street car, at church or wherever I go. "What protection is the consumer to have?" Surely either the people's champion, Stuart Chase or as distinguished a law student as A. A. Berle could clear up this question for a waiting public. I and many of my friends are waiting for such an article.

Very truly yours,
WILLARD C. LIGHTER.

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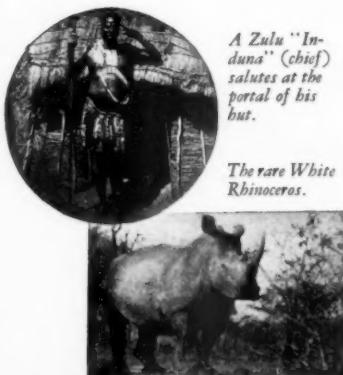
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BEHIND THE SCENES

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

Continued

SOUTHERN NEGROES

In the first place the whole article ["Pans to Tote," by Miriam Pope Cimino—August SCRIBNER'S] is a grotesque misconception and misrepresentation of the truth relative to the Negro, for Negroes do not like to live in the South. But nearly twelve million of them live there and they cannot leave just because they desire to leave. It requires money, time, energy and in fact, the people have too much at stake to just pull up and leave the south. They stay there because they cannot help themselves that is in any large number.

No person could be satisfied working for \$1.50 for a week, and any one who knows the south, knows that Negroes are better off in New York, Boston, Chicago, Phila., and other northern cities than they are anywhere in the south. For in the first place they are not robbed out of their prorata share of the taxes appropriated for schools, and they are not Jimcrowed and segregated, and they are not framed up as the nine Scottsboro boys were and held in jail for nothing.

If Mrs. Cimino would read the following books, she would disillusion herself of some conceptions about the Negro in the South. They are: *The Negro in American Politics* by William F. Nowlin, *The Negro Wage Earner* by Lorenzo J. Greene and Doctor Carter G. Woodson; *The Black Worker* by Sterling Spero and Abram L. Harris; *Forced Labor in the United States* by Walter C. Wilson; *Georgia Nigger* by John L. Spivak; *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer* by Doctor Paul K. Edwards; *Negro Labor in the U. S.* by Doctor Charles H. Wesley; and *I am a Fugitive from the Chain Gang* by Robert Burns.

I have just returned from a long trip which took me through seventeen states in the south and southwestern part of the U. S., and in all of the largest cities in the south, and I know that the conditions of Negroes are horrifying in nearly all of those states. In many instances Negroes cannot get food unless they work a week, and then they only get a forty pound sack of flour and a piece of fat back, probably ten or twelve pounds, for a family of four and five. If a Negro is not known by some white person in the community, he cannot get food or clothing from the Red Cross people. Food is not given out in the south to Negroes as it is in New York, Boston, Phila., and other northern cities, according to their needs. In many instances it is given because some white person pities them or because they are supposed to be "good niggers," and then, they do not get according to their needs, but according to the population. They get what is supposed to be theirs per capita.

Consequently if a community has 500 white people, and 50 Negroes, the Negroes get what is supposed to be one fifth of the amount appropriated, when as a matter of fact, all of the Negroes may be unemployed and in dire need, while there may be ten white people unemployed, and may not need anything, for they may be living with their relatives who are willing and able to take care of them. Any one knows that Negroes are robbed out of their school taxes everywhere in the south and even in Texas, North Carolina, and Va., where more moneys are appropriated than in any other states for Negroes. Forty per cent of the children of school age cannot go to school because they either have no schools for them, or that they cannot get clothing sufficient to go to school.

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SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

A MAGAZINE OF HUMAN INTEREST, MODERN FICTION, AND IMPARTIAL INTERPRETATION

VOL. XCIV, NO. 5

1887 FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR 1933

NOVEMBER 1933

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Coming
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or later
649

*Who Will Protect the
Consumer under N.R.A.?*
by Stuart Chase

An article of extreme importance to
that great class, the buyers, who may
be caught between the upper and
nether millstone.

*Christmas Fiction
Number—*

Three Fine Stories
by James Gould Cozzens,
Caroline Gordon, Thomas
Wolfe

The Future of Religion
by Abbé Dimmet
The famous author of "The Art of
Thinking"

*The Government in
Search of a Labor
Movement*

by Benjamin Stolberg
Will the labor unions become a part of
the Government, surrendering inde-
pendent action?

The Old Stone House
by Edmund Wilson
An evocative and warming account of
a return to the family home

Are Servants People?
by Dorothy Dunbar
Bromley

Thorstein Veblen—
a short biography
by Ernest Sutherland Bates

I Can Count on Myself
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QUEEN'S IN THE PARLOR, BY HELEN WOODWARD. *Bobbs-Merrill*. \$2.—A cold-blooded little devil of an advertising man's wife sucks his life blood for 306 pages and dies, leaving her husband 10 pages to recover his happiness. Best in its pictures of what advertising men were, or thought they were, before 1929 prickled the bubble.

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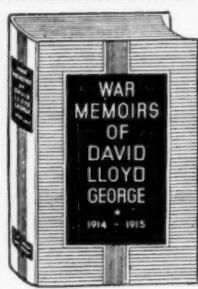
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they allowed Von Papen to oust the Socialist government of Prussia with an officer and fifteen men; with Hitler in power they still counselled moderation; they were insisting upon it even when they were being beaten along the road to the concentration camps. Have we anything better to look forward to in England and the United States, asks Mr. Strachey? Fascism is a sharp division of a country into two classes, the rulers and the slaves. It is a retreat along the way of progress, it is a retrogression to the Dark Ages. Communism means the abolition of classes. There was once a time when we might say, as is still being said, that we want neither the dictatorship of Fascism nor of Communism, but that time is past, contends Mr. Strachey. We have no third choice. Democracy and evolutionary Socialism are in eclipse. Only those can fail to see it who refuse to see it. Which are we to choose, Communism or Fascism? Mr. Strachey makes no secret of his own choice, which is Communism.

KYLE CRICHTON.

IN THEM THAR HILLS

Dark Moon of March. By Emmett Gowen. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.

This novel chronicles the joys, disappointments, and defeats of a southern hill billy who floats from place to place in the effort to procure a painted house and a few comforts for himself and his family. The protagonist's hope is constantly postponed by a series of casual and accidental events, the weather, a fight, the kind of land and landlords he happens to get. Mr. Gowen apparently strives to inculcate into his story broader implications than a simple telling of his tale would contain. His means is that of literary invention; impersonal analysis of the unworded feelings and meagrely articulated thoughts of his hero, descriptions of nature, and natural references that seek to relate the characters to the seasons and processes of nature. In such parts, the writing is often stiff or ordinary, and tends to make the protagonist more reflective than one would expect him to be. He is not only a southern hill billy but also partly the author. Had Mr. Gowen adopted the simpler means of delineating the manner in which his hero worked in the terms of a system that destined not only him, but also all share croppers, to a constant postponement and sacrifice of hopes, he would have succeeded in writ-

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ing into his book the kind of implications he ostensibly attempted to suggest.

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In Peru he met his wife, Violet Beauclerk was the daughter of an English diplomat whom the furies of hypochondria drove virtually to the point of madness. The paternal inheritance enabled Mrs. Clifton the better to comprehend her husband. The intensities of their two uncompromising natures bound them inseparably and at the same time pulled the union awry. Once, she being at fault, deliberately burned her arm with a live coal. He said, "Don't answer my anger with anger; help me instead." And again, "It is not that men deserve women to be good, but in that goodness is their only anchorage."

The style is most unusual. One finds it hard to be edified by such dedications as "To God for Talbot," by chapters of thin blank verse and the undying devotion of a wife whose obsession it is to make a god of a husband who was after all a man. But as the book is writ-

(Continued on page 8)

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The big reason why the Great American Novel and all that, hasn't been written is to be seen in *Life in the United States*. You need to be a lot of people, a lot of explorers and an emotional encyclopedia to write it. You have to have a hundred novelistic eyes, swiftly moving and in all directions at once. You have to be that most multitudinous and meaningful document, the *U. S. Census*, plus a Dostoevsky or two.

And not all of the United States is in the present book. There's not a quaver of New England. And if I wanted to mention omissions, I believe I could. But enough is present in *Life in the United States* to make it compulsory reading for those people who smugly simplify America and show rippling how "standardized" it is compared to Roumania, say, or maybe Argentina. These people are just geographically dumb; and more than geographically, I'm thinking.

Look—in "Fragments from Alluvia," by E. P. O'Donnell, we have the Lowest Mississippi—warmth, swamps, Negroes, French and all the folk-lore and "folk-ways" any Ukrainian wants. In "Hills of Home" by Mary Hesse Hartwick, there are great loneliness—even now—and the dazzlingly high, white and far Montana mountains. The contemporary legend and heavy, aromatic talk that go with drilling for oil in our Southwest are to be found in "Old Billy Hell" by Daniel M. Garrison; here, yes, is folk-lore in the making going on with high, modern commerce. And Rion Berovicci, Connie McCrae, and Robert Hazard show us hard and swarming New York in the land that also has strange and gorgeous inns in the misty Appalachians; dirty and free-and-easy (at least for a while) homes of Polack steel-workers in steel-towns; and the white, hot roads and the fairly ethical Indians of New Mexico. And there are the trains that go through and round America; and a bride who lives in a box-car of one

(Continued on page 11)



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of them. And there is a magnificent brewery. And the South, damnable brutal and damnable sweet. And green, red, purple at the bottom of the waters about California. And a prison for U. S. Marines; a lady who does bootlegging speedily in her car across Pennsylvania; and capitalism in the form of real-estate and suicide in Florida and the sad comedown of a glassblower whose job the machines invaded. And to be sure there's more in the book and mighty lots more in America.

The stories, as writing, are about evenly good. The only over-writing, it seems to be, is by Meridel LeSueur, in her "Corn Village," trying to picture the flatness and misery of Kansas. The answer to Miss LeSueur, by Maureen McKernan, is, as I see it, more soberly written, and as appearing truth, comes off better. Curiously, Miss LeSueur, in her other story, "Beer Town," is pretty rhapsodic; and her writing here is definitely finer—more credible.

Anyway, here's immense chewing matter for sincere and adroit Fieldings and Tolstoys east and west of the Mississippi.

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Mr. Johnson has a large percentage of white blood, and his autobiography has too many of the innocuous white graces. It is written with neither hate, despair nor emotion of any kind. It is so passionless that the reader gradually perceives a secondary, and more specialized, tragedy unfolding, that of the Negro who becomes an imitation white man. It is fashionable, now that the de-

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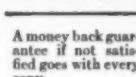


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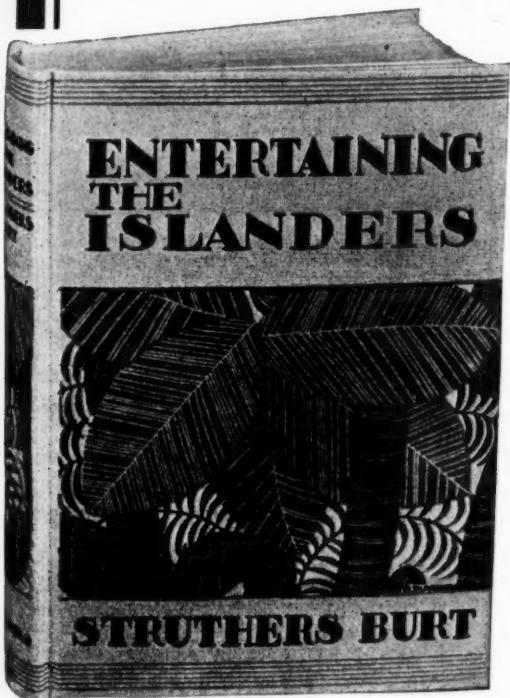
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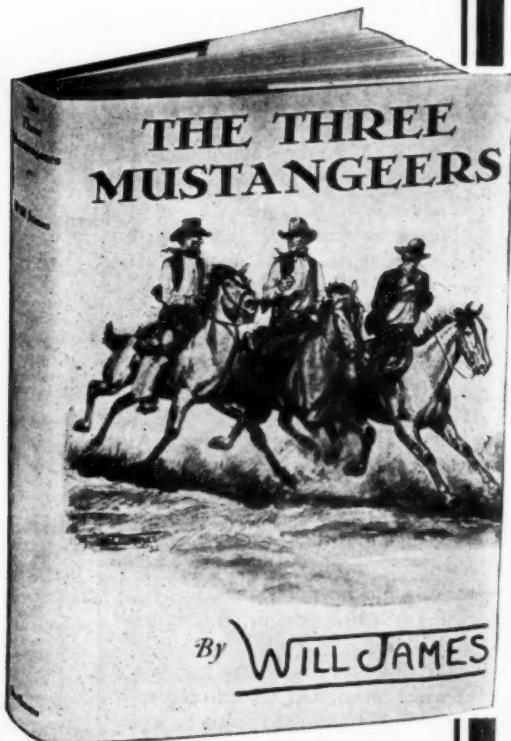
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(Continued on page 18)

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Hicks notes, for example, the sensational gap between Hawthorne's daily experience, as reflected in his notebooks, and the subjects he considered proper for his fiction: in the notebooks Hawthorne recorded all sorts of common experiences which he rigidly excluded from his stories. Later writers revealed the same inability to cope with their times, and tried to adjust themselves by taking flight, like Henry James; by ignoring the changes, like Lowell and others; by stifling their critical impulses, like Mark Twain and Howells and Garland; by making an uncritical acceptance, like Whitman; by sinking into abject negation, like Henry Adams. The most conspicuous social development in this period was the growth of industrial capitalism, and Mr. Hicks begins his analyses by noting how individual writers responded to this phenomenon. The method gives a unity to the book and provides a key for understanding complex cultural streams and frustrated careers which otherwise—in the essays of even so careful a critic as Van Wyck Brooks, for example—seem only wayward and inexplicable.

Mr. Hicks is a moralist before he is a Marxist—or, rather, he seems to have arrived at a Marxian point of view by way of indignation against the spiritual fatigue, the despair, the "slimy" futility (his phrase) that marks so much contemporary writing. The moral judgments in *The Great Tradition* are much more sensitive and acute than the aesthetic judgments; the memorable passages are those which deal with the erosion and loss of purpose of Howells and Garland, with the ethical dilemmas of Twain and Lowell, rather than those which deal with the positive aesthetic contributions of Henry James. Precisely because Mr. Hicks is a moralist and a Marxist he is able to write of Melville and Mike Gold in the same breath, so to speak, and to make similar leaps which would be impossible for a critic primarily occupied with literary values.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

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(Continued on page 27, Rear Advertising Section)